

MIDLANDS

THE UK'S BIGGEST REGIONAL GAY LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

ZONE

THE ESSENTIAL
NIGHTLIFE +
CLUBBING
GUIDE

ISSUE 216 £1.80 APRIL 2015

READERS'
AWARDS 2015
**WINNERS
REVEALED!**
FIND OUT WHO
WON WHAT INSIDE!

**JESS
GLYNNE**

THE 'HOLD MY HAND'
STAR HEADLINES
BIRMINGHAM PRIDE

PLUS MANY MORE ARTISTS ANNOUNCED INSIDE!



ALEXANDRA BURKE
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH
THE BODYGUARD STAR

ISSN 1462-7035





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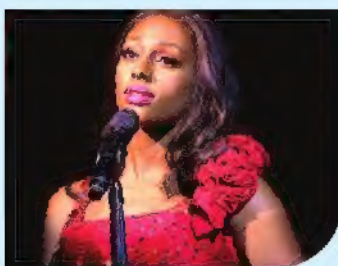
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The Editor's Note

Ryan Humphreys @ryanhumphreys

A very warm welcome to the April edition of Midlands Zone magazine. As an anonymous writer once wrote, 'Spring has sprung, the grass is riz' - which pretty much means it's time to start getting ready for this year's Birmingham Pride festival!

Coming Together



Jess Glynne

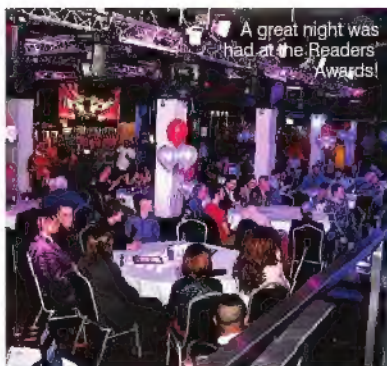
After last year's hugely successful event, the Midlands gay scene is now gearing up for 2015's sure-to-be-fun festivities, taking place over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend of Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 May.

This year's festival features all of Birmingham Pride's well-established favourites, from the Carnival Parade and Main Stage through to the Cabaret Marquee and Women's Arena. Performers who've already been confirmed to appear include Hold My Hand star Jess Glynne, Example, Boney M, Jimmy Somerville and Marvin Humes' latest group, Luvbug.

This year's Pride theme is Freedom: Together United, in recognition of how much more can be achieved by coming together. So why not make sure that you yourself come together with the rest of the Midlands gay community by getting along to this year's festival - it's gonna be a weekend to remember...

Readers' Awards

In this issue of Midlands Zone you'll find a special feature on the 2015 Zone Readers' Awards. The awards were handed out to the worthy winners at a special event at Birmingham's Nightingale Club on 20 March, and a very enjoyable night was had by all. As ever, we here at Midlands Zone would like to extend our thanks to all of you who voted in this year's Awards, and to those of you who completed our annual



A great night was had at the Readers' Awards!

readership survey. It's important as well to say a hearty thank you to all the nominees and winners of the 2015 Awards. They were nominated because the Midlands LGBT community really appreciates them. Their contribution to making the region's gay scene such a fantastic experience for us all to enjoy should never be underestimated.

Goodbye, Gudrun...

After 15 glorious years together, we this month say a hugely fond farewell to our columnist Gudrun Limbrick. As Gudrun herself points out in her final column, there have been plenty of positive developments for the LGBT community in the time that she's been writing for us, from the repeal of Section 28 through to the more-recent legalisation of gay marriage.

Gudrun has had her say on pretty much all the key LGBT issues since the year 2000, and we'll certainly miss her incisive and always witty contribution to our magazine.

Best wishes to her as she forsakes the marvellous Midlands for a life near the ocean waves.

Calling all writers...

With Gudrun's departure, we're on the look out for new columnists. If you're sitting at home on a veritable pile of opinions about issues relating to gay life and are just itching to get them down on paper, maybe Midlands Zone could provide you with the perfect outlet for doing so. Check out The Last Word section of the magazine if you fancy yourself as our next Gudrun Limbrick or another Steve Ball (thankfully Steve is staying with us and continuing to write his column, hurrah!).

That's all for now. Have a good one...

Ryan x

What's Hot!

Tom & Dustin! ♥



When the news broke that Tom Daley was gay, the whole of the UK's LGBT community started surfing the internet to find out who his boyfriend was. And now it's been two years since Tom and Dustin Lance-Black first met! Cute!

RuPaul's Drag Race to be screened in the UK!



About time too! Hit US drag talent show RuPaul's Drag Race has been picked up by new UK broadcaster truTV, meaning the show is finally getting some much-deserved airtime! Catch it on the new channel from June!

What's Not!

Dolce & Gabbana



It was widely reported last month that Elton John has called for a boycott of Dolce & Gabbana products after the designers made 'archaic' comments on IVF and same-sex parents. We support Elton's views on this - but do you? Do you think a boycott will make any difference?

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Mark Ward

Service Manager
Brook Sexual Health

Born: **Wolverhampton**

Star sign: **Capricorn**

Age: **28**

Each month we take a look at someone from the Midlands LGBT community. This issue our focus turns on Mark Ward, a Service Manager for Brook Sexual Health.

About Mark

Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Sedgley. It's a tiny village in the Midlands reminiscent of The League Of Gentlemen's Royston Vasey.

Single or attached?

Single, something which I enjoy.

What makes you happy?

Putting the world to rights with friends over a cocktail or three. Escaping somewhere different for the weekend. And I love it when it snows. I'm also really fortunate to absolutely love my job.

What makes you sad?

At work I see cases of child neglect, abuse and exploitation - some really harrowing things. We work extremely hard to prevent these, but I think there's a huge need for us to do more as a society to protect those who can't protect themselves. It makes me incredibly sad to know that these things are going on at all, let alone in the developed world.

What makes you angry?

People who get preachy about being sober and overly healthy, probably because I'm guilty of over-indulgence!
People who try to convince me to believe in ghosts, superstitions, the importance of star signs or anything else ridiculous!
People whose houses smell like dog, as it makes me sneeze.
Poor-quality vodka.
Pollen.

If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?

I'd be less modest. Joking, obviously! I'd probably give myself a sense of shame or regret. I've learned to do without both, thanks to my wonderful friends. I'd love to be able to dance, but I have appalling rhythm! Also, I'd stop myself from being such an angry driver. I suppose there are lots of things everyone would change about themselves, but I'm a firm believer in making the most of your flaws. God knows I've got enough of them!

What's been the most embarrassing thing you've done in your life?

Oh, so many things! Recently I walked into a glass door in the Loft Lounge in front of a whole host of people. I broke down on the motorway on the way home from GLAS and had to call the AA out while I was wearing full face character make-up and a prosthetic nose. Essentially, most of my behaviour could be termed embarrassing!

Now that same-sex marriage has been legalised, would you consider getting married?

I think I'd rather spend the money on a car or a holiday. The only benefits of marriage for me personally would be the legal protection; that your partner would be looked after. However, I do see the importance in taking advantage of something that's come as the result of a long struggle. For me at the moment, though, it's a no!

Coming Out

When did you first know you were gay?

I think you always know, but I

suppose the first time I became really aware of being gay was when I was about 13.

When did you come out?

When I was about 16, but I wasn't open about it to everyone until quite a few years after that. Much to my dismay, nobody made a big deal of it! I was quite fortunate not to have had a hard time coming out.

What was school like for you as a gay teenager?

Both my primary and secondary schools were Roman Catholic, so school was... interesting! I was lucky that I wasn't bullied, and I received a fantastic education thanks to those schools. I think there are a lot of issues to be addressed in ensuring that children are taught the right values, while also respecting the right to bring up your child in line with your beliefs - something which I personally think is incredibly important.

Who was the first person you told you were gay, and what was their reaction?

The first person was my mom - what a cliché! As most mothers do, she already knew!

What would you say to a youngster trying to come to terms with their own sexuality?

I'd emphasise that they're not alone - there are a lot of young people going through exactly the same thing - and that there are people who can help them, namely wonderful organisations such as Brook. Shameless plug!

Have you ever had any experiences with the opposite sex?

I certainly have not. The last time I

came close to one of those things was twenty-eight years ago when I fell out of it! I spent some time working as a body painter, so I've seen more than enough of the female body to know it's not for me!

Your Career

When you were younger, what did you want to be?

I wanted to be a fireman or a soldier, but I'm terrified of heights... and being shot.

What was your first job after leaving school?

I was a terribly lazy university student, so I put off getting a job for ages. Then I landed on my feet working as an assistant for an incredibly talented production designer named Neil Hughes, who I'm lucky to count as a close friend to this day. He gave me some incredible opportunities, experiences and memories, for which I'll forever be indebted! The highlight of my time with Neil was probably working for Jean Paul Gaultier - although most jobs included body painting an attractive male model of some variety!

What do you do now?

I'm incredibly proud to be part of an organisation called Brook, which provides free and confidential sexual health services to young people. I've always thought that sexual health and relationship advice was something I'd have liked to have had more of, and better access to, when growing up, so it's very rewarding being able to support young people in this way. As I mentioned before, we deal with everything from the very positive side of sexual health through to supporting young people who've been the victims of some terrible things.

What's the most rewarding part of your job?

Seeing the benefit the service has for young people. Being able to go home at night knowing that someone's life is better because of something we've done. Often we see young people who feel like they have no one to talk to, nowhere to go and that the weight of the world is on their shoulders. Sometimes they just need a helping hand and a safe space. I'm also lucky enough to have a fantastic team, who couldn't be more passionate and devoted.

Working in sexual health, there must be some funny stories?

In sexual health, no question is a stupid question. It's important to

myth-bust! I tend to find the funny stories come from the conversations between staff. As you can imagine, it's not your typical office banter. I've quite often opened the drawer at work to find what we politely call a 'condom demonstrator', when all I wanted was a pen!

What's the hardest part of the job?

The challenges faced by most charities. We can only deliver services in line with what's in the bank. We'd love to be able to provide services for everyone across the country, but we're limited by what we can afford. Part of my job is having to make the decision about when we've reached capacity in terms of what we can provide. It pains me to think that there might be young people missing out on a vital service because the government has run out of money to fund organisations such as ours.

You're a trustee of the LGBT Network in Wolverhampton. What does your role involve?

Sitting on the Board of Directors to support the charity in identifying its purpose, values and direction. The LGBT Network in Wolverhampton supports a growing number of vulnerable people in our community with a wide range of issues. We're blessed to have an exceptional General Manager in Martha Bishop. The Network wouldn't exist without her. I can safely say that, within our community in Wolverhampton, I don't think so much has ever been owed by so many people to one individual.

Gay Scene

How long have you been frequenting the Midlands gay scene?

Since I was about 20. Before that I stayed closer to home.

Who's your favourite cabaret act on the gay scene?

This is the million dollar question, as quite a few dear friends are cabaret acts on the scene. Locally I think we're very lucky to have Miss Penny and Glitter Lipz, but my favourite would have to be Kitty Litter or Cassidy Connors.

Who's your favourite person on the gay scene?

Now you're just being unfair! If I had to say, then it would probably be the person I go drinking with most often - the Solihull Slapper herself, Connie!



What do you most enjoy about the gay scene?

That you could turn up on your own, on a whim, and within a few minutes bump into friends. I think the Birmingham scene is by far the friendliest in the country. And I think we know how to get elegantly wasted!

What have you noticed about the way the gay scene's changed over the years?

I think it's brilliant that the scene moves with the times. Everyone remembers those couple of years when they first started going out on the scene, and it feels unique to them and their friends. Every couple of years the scene takes on a new identity, while at the same time retaining the fundamental elements that make it fantastic.

How would you change the Midlands' gay scene?

I'd encourage a bit more recognition for the people who work so hard to make the scene what it is. There are individuals and families in Birmingham to whom we owe a lot, particularly when it comes to staging events like Birmingham Pride.

Time Out

Where do you like to go on a night out?

You can't beat a good Friday night out at The Village, but stick me anywhere on the scene and I'll manage to enjoy myself - one way or another!

What do you do to relax?

Drink. I'd like to emphasise that I don't mean at home, alone and crying!

What do you enjoy on telly?

Game Of Thrones and House Of Cards.

What was the last album or track you bought?

Florence And The Machine's new track.

Which one website do you spend the most time on?

Sadly, the intranet at work! But after that, Facebook.

Which type of holiday do you prefer?

City breaks. I can't abide sitting on the beach doing nothing.

Quickfire

Who's your favourite actor?

Anthony Hopkins.

What's your favourite book?

Moby Dick.

Half empty or half full?

Half full.

What's your favourite food?

Steak.

And how about your favourite drink?

A well-made Cosmopolitan.

Madonna or Lady Gaga?

Madonna.

Gaydar or Grindr?

Grindr. It's not the '90s!

If you could take a selfie with one person, alive or dead, who would it be?

James Dean.

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What's On
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THE UK'S LARGEST REGIONAL
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We endorse the recycling of our magazine and would encourage you to pass it on to others to read when you have finished with it.

PRIDE Jess Glynne and Example first headliners to be announced for Birmingham Pride 2015

Organisers of Birmingham's annual Pride festival have announced that Jess Glynne, Example and '70s legends Boney M will feature among the headlining acts at this year's event - to be held in the city over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend of Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 May.

Birmingham Pride Festival Director Lawrence Barton commented: "As one of the largest Gay Pride events in the UK, we're absolutely delighted to have pulled out all the stops, once again, to present another massive line-up for this year.

"We're expecting a record turnout, attracting people from throughout the UK. There are over 100 artists

and DJs performing during the weekend, and there's definitely something for everyone to enjoy."

Other acts announced for the festival include Jimmy Somerville, Fuse ODG, Karen Harding, Becky Hill, Chris Lorenzo and former JLS star Marvin Humes, with his latest group, Luvbug.

The Birmingham Pride festival also features a dance arena, cabaret marquee, funfair and community village green, in addition to a host of community stalls and refreshments.

This year the Carnival Parade, which sets off from Victoria Square at midday on Saturday 24 May, will adopt Freedom - Together United as its cam-



Jess Glynne

paigning theme.

Advance Tickets for the festival, which is located in Birmingham's Gay Village in the Southside area of the city, are available online from www.birmingham-pride.com at a cost of

£14 for day tickets and £20 for weekend tickets. Children under five get free admission when accompanied by an adult.

HATE CRIME Worcester blackmailer who preyed on gay men is jailed

A blackmailer who preyed on homosexual men in a lay-by and the toilets in a Worcester park has been jailed for seven years.

The Malvern Gazette reports: 'Lee Taylor was released after a four-and-a-half-year jail sentence in November last year for similar offences and within three days of his release he sought out more victims. Worcester Crown Court heard.

'The 24-year-old has now been banned from entering Gheluvelt Park in Worcester until further order.

'His method was to meet complete strangers and engage in sexual activity with them before threatening to reveal their secret to their families and employers, Patrick Sullivan, prosecuting, told the court.

'On November 12 last year, his first victim drove to a lay-by on the A449 just outside Worcester at about 6pm and Taylor approached him. They had consensual sexual activity and the victim then gave Taylor a lift.

"As they drove off, Taylor asked his victim for money for what had happened or he would make sure his family and his employer would know," Mr Sullivan told the court. He also threatened to report him for rape because the DNA evidence was all over him, Mr Sullivan said.

'Jason Aris, defending, said Taylor, of no fixed address, could not find work after his release from jail and was living on the streets. He had no other way of getting money. He had shown genuine remorse and intended to use his time in prison to gain qualifications.'

HATE CRIME Grindr blackmailers to pay compensation to victim

Two Gloucester men who used gay website Grindr to blackmail a suspected paedophile have been ordered to pay him compensation of £5,000 each.

The Gloucester Citizen reports: 'Nathanael Foster and Adam Webb were each jailed for four years last September after they admitted posing as under-age boys on the gay website Grindr and luring two men who they then demanded money from.

'They were back before Gloucester Crown Court this week for a confiscation hearing under the Proceeds of Crime Act.

'Prosecutor Julian Kesner said it had been agreed with their defence lawyers that they each benefited by £7,650 from their crimes and each had assets of £5,000 available to be confiscated.

'The money is to be paid to one of their victims who handed over £15,000 to them, he said. The other victim, from whom they demanded £10,000, was unable to pay and went to the police.

'Judge Michael Harington formally ordered that the defendants each pay £5,000 within six months or have an extra three months jail added to their sentences in default of payment.

'He ruled that the money is to be paid as compensation to the victim, who cannot be named.

'Foster, of Wheatstone Road, Gloucester, and Webb, of Kingsway, both aged 26, pleaded guilty at last year's hearing to two charges of blackmail.

'They had claimed initially that they were not intending to blackmail their victims and were being 'good citizens wishing to expose criminal behaviour'.

'Mr Kesner told the court at that time: "These two men came up with a nasty scheme to extort money. They were motivated by greed and prejudice. Their scheme struck terror into the hearts of their victims."

ARTS Candlelit Cabaret star Glen set for 'spectacular' song and dance return this Spring

One of the Midlands' best-known theatre faces is busy preparing to stage a glittering cabaret show in Tamworth.

Singer Glen Chevannes will perform in the Candlelit Cabaret at the Castle Hotel Tamworth on Saturday 18 April.

The show, entitled Feelin' Good, will see former cruise ship singer and panto veteran Glen perform material from a 300-song repertoire including pop songs, ballads, big band numbers and showstoppers. He will be joined by his special

guests, international cabaret star Jayne Hardware and Birmingham mezzo-soprano Marie Louise-Allard, as well as the glamorous Jango Entertainment professional dancers.

"Candlelit Cabaret is very special to me," says Glen. "The intimate, candlelit setting of the Tudor Suite creates a wonderfully warm environment in which to give and receive a concert. If you're looking for a chilled-out, relaxing evening, I can't think of anything better."

Tickets for Candlelit Cabaret



are priced at £28.50 and include a four-course dinner, the show itself and a disco. Doors open at 7pm for dinner at 7.45 pm. The show starts at 8.45 pm. Tickets are available now from the Castle Hotel reception on 01827 317700 or by emailing nikki@castle-hotel-tamworth.co.uk

RELIGION Anti-gay marriage Bishop to retire

The Bishop of Lichfield, who opposed gay marriage, has announced his retirement after 12 years in the post.

BBC News reports: "In a video message posted on YouTube, the Rt Rev Jonathan Gledhill, 66, said he was leaving 'with mixed feelings' but added 'it would not be right to continue much longer'.

'He will leave the position, which covers Staffordshire, Shropshire and the Black Country, in September.

'The bishop made the announcement as the diocese was marking St Chad's Day. 'Educated at Keele University, Bishop Gledhill served as a minister in Kent for 20 years before becoming Bishop of Southampton in 1996. He

was installed as Bishop of Lichfield in 2003.

'During his time in the role, he called on Christians not to feel intimidated about wearing crosses in public and also expressed strong views opposing gay marriage

'He said: "Forty years of ministry seems a good stint."

'He and his wife, Jane, plan to retire to Kent.'

NATIONAL NEWS

LITERATURE Stonewall launches new Young Writers' competition for teen authors

Stonewall, the lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans equality charity, has launched its first Young Writers' competition for budding authors between the ages of 14 and 17.

The competition invites young people to submit short stories and poems that support the theme of 'LGBT equality: changing hearts and minds'. Entries will be judged by best-selling author SJ Watson (Second Life and Before I Go To Sleep), poet Dean Atta and Stonewall CEO Ruth Hunt. The deadline for entries is 22 May, with the winners expected to be announced on 15 June.

CHARITY THT's Walk For Life set to return with a Hollywood theme

HIV and sexual health charity Terrence Higgins Trust is getting ready to roll out the red carpet and shout "Lights, Camera, Action!", as hundreds of charity supporters transform the 26th annual Walk For Life into a Hollywood Walk of Fame.

The charity is calling for action heroes, child stars and sirens of the silver screen to take part in the 10km sponsored walk around central London on Sunday 7 June, to help raise funds for people living with HIV in severe financial need.

Participants are encouraged to put their own stamp on the Hollywood theme, whether that means donning Indiana Jones' famous fedora, slipping into Dorothy's ruby slippers, or simply getting gussied up in their Tinsel Town finest. Paparazzi-shy walkers are welcome to go incognito too.

The walk begins at 11am and takes around two to three hours to complete. At the finish line, participants will be given a medal, which unlocks a range of special offers at bars and restaurants in central London.

To join in the fun, either as an individual walker or as part of a team, register at walkforlife.co.uk or call (020) 7812 1665. Registration costs £10 per person, which helps Terrence Higgins Trust cover the costs of the event. Walk For Life was founded in 1989, when HIV charity Crusaid set up the event to raise awareness of HIV.

EDUCATION Birmingham primary school in row over lessons about gay issues

Angry parents have signed a petition in a bid to stop pupils being taught about homosexuality at a Birmingham primary school.

The Birmingham Mail reports: 'Concerned parents of pupils at Clifton Primary School in Balsall Heath are lobbying the school to put a stop to plans to teach their children about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues.

'They said the subject "conflicted" with the religious beliefs of the children, who are predominantly Muslim - while they also believed four-year-olds are too young to be taught the subject.

The petition was sparked after the school held meetings with parents to reveal it was set to implement the Challenging Homophobia in Primary Schools (CHIPS) programme.

'A similar scheme called Pride In Education (PIE) is also being implemented at secondary schools - with both programmes due to be rolled out across all local authority-controlled schools in Birmingham by 2018.

'They use books, music and videos to explain to pupils about children who grow up in all types of families - including those with LGBT parents.

'One parent, who did not want to be named, said: "It's not just a Muslim issue, it is an opinion shared across all faiths."

"The material needs to be age appropriate and we do not feel it is. Four-year-olds should be allowed to be children, this is taking their innocence away. They should go to school to play with their dolls or play in the playground. I know it's part of life and they need to learn about it, but I feel it would be

more appropriate when they are in Year 5 or Year 6."

'Headteacher Christine Mitchell said: "We have had three consultation meetings with parents where we explained how CHIPS worked and showed them the books we will use. We explained we were planning to introduce this in line with advice from the local authority. We have been open and honest and are trying to have a dialogue with them. We have always taught diversity and equality and it is important that the wider public know that."

The news comes after the subject sparked outrage last year at Welford School in Handsworth, where headteacher Jamie Barry was confronted by more than 100 angry parents worried about the lessons.

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THE VIRAL ROUND-UP

Here's what we've been looking at online...

We all do it - spend hours on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. Often, we're distracted from what we should be doing by cat videos and funny pranks - or by something feelgood that's been shared so much on the net it's officially classed as 'viral'. Well, here are some of Midlands Zone's favourites from the past month!

CHECK THIS OUT NOW!

Heartwarming kissing skeletons declare that love has no labels!

Racking up a staggering 46 million views and counting is this heartwarming video which shows two skeletons hugging, kissing and then revealing themselves to be a female couple. The ad, promoting the Diversity & Inclusion - Love Has No Labels campaign, has left plenty of people with huge smiles on their faces! Watch it here:

youtu.be/PnDgZuGhHs



WATCH THIS! The best video we've been watching this month...



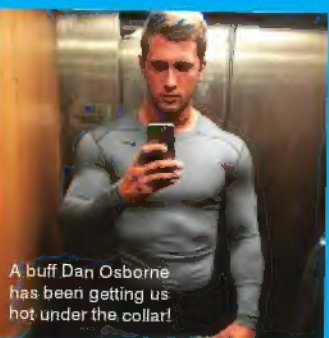
Here at Zone, we love a charity calendar full of hot, naked men. So hats off to King's College London's rugby team for making our day in their effort to raise money for LGBT domestic violence charity Broken Rainbow. See behind the scenes here: youtu.be/Az51x6EFpY0

SNAP HAPPY!

Our favourite pictures from Instagram...



Chris Mears looks sassy in this one!



DIRECT FROM THE WEST END

DIRTY ROTTEN SCOUNDRELS

THE MUSICAL

NO1 BEST NEW MUSICAL
OF 2014

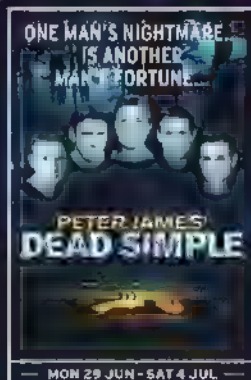
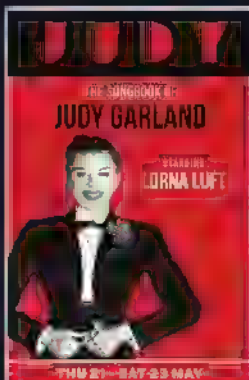
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SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

'A MASTERCLASS IN HOW
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DAILY MAIL

TUE 5 - SAT 16 MAY



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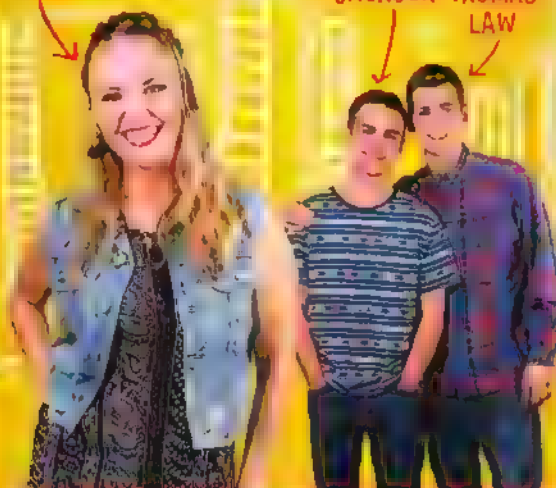
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ALEXANDRA BURKE

TALKS ABOUT HER
CAREER & STARRING IN
HIT MUSICAL
THE BODYGUARD



Winning The X Factor in 2006 propelled London-born singer Alexandra Burke to overnight success, with her debut release, Hallelujah, becoming the top-selling single of that year. Currently receiving great critical acclaim for her portrayal of pop diva Rachel Marron in the touring production of hit musical The Bodyguard, Alexandra reveals to Midlands Zone why she originally turned down the role made famous by Whitney Houston.

How has life changed for you since winning The X Factor back in 2006?

It's been incredible so far. My life's changed completely - and all for the better. I'm much, much happier. I'm content and I'm doing what I love. It's a lot of hard work - success doesn't come on a silver platter - but the rewards are there when you put the work in.

Since The X Factor, you've notched up six top-ten hits, three of which were number ones. Did you ever imagine you'd be so successful?

No, not at all. I always used to say, 'no expectations, just high hopes'. That's the way I've always lived my life - never expecting anything, doing what I love and putting one hundred-and-ten percent into everything I do. What comes out of it, whether it be ups or downs, I take as it comes. I take the good with the bad and always try to remain focused.

Is being a popstar/actress everything you imagined it would be?

Yes, and more. I'm at a point in my life where I'm very, very happy and content. Don't get me wrong, there have been ups and downs - not only personally but with my career too. You learn from each and every thing that you do.

You've also been nominated for, and won, a considerable number of awards since the start of your career. How does it feel to be held in such high regard?

It's lovely. I never read anything negative or anything positive - I just do what I do. For me, that works. After I won The X Factor, I'd find negative things online to read, and that would put me in a really bad place. So now I don't read anything at all. I just be myself and do everything to the best of my ability. It's lovely when I get great feedback, such as awards nominations, but then I take it with a pinch of salt and keep on moving. I don't ever want to believe my own hype.

You're currently starring as Rachel Marron in The Bodyguard musical. Was musical theatre always on your radar?

It was always on my radar but not something that I thought I'd be doing at this point in my life. I remember discussing musical theatre with a management company I was with a few years ago, and thought I'd probably be doing it when I was in my thirties. But it's come around now and I'm having the best time of my life. For me, you can never say never. I don't disregard anything - especially now that I'm doing The Bodyguard, which I never expected to be doing. You never know what can come out of opportunities like this. Because of it, I'm in a great place. It's been a great journey so far.

You originally declined the offer to play Rachel. Why?

I didn't have the confidence to do it. I didn't think I could take on such an iconic role and do it justice. I wasn't in the right mental space to take on the job. Taking a year out of music and moving to New York certainly helped me. Whilst I was there, I studied life coaching and that

completely changed everything for me. That was the turnaround point, where I realised I was worthy enough to have more in my life if I worked at it. If I really want something, through working hard, I can get it. When they offered it to me the second time, they just gave me the job. I told them that they needed to audition me, and that they couldn't just give me the job based on my name. So they auditioned me - and two hours later, I got the job.

This is a role that you played in the West End. How does the touring production differ?

It's a revamped version of the West End show. I think it's an even better show. Not a lot has changed, but the changes we've made have had a great impact. I really feel in my element. I urge people who've already seen it in London to come and see it again because it's different.

Whitney Houston played Rachel in the film version. Was she an inspiration to you?

Absolutely. She was an inspiration to me in terms of the vocal. I've listened to Whitney since I was a kid, and she's someone I always looked up to. I deliberately didn't watch the film when I got the part because I wanted my depiction of Rachel to be completely different. My interpretation of the character is so different. I've made her diva-ish and rude. By the end of Act One I'm hoping people fall in love with her and realise that she's only human and wants to find love. It's been an interesting journey to create that character. It's about keeping her sexy, and that's one of the reasons why I dance so much in the show.

Do you have anything in common with Rachel?

The love she has for her team and her child. I don't have children but I have nieces and nephews. I swear by my family, and that's how Rachel comes across to me in parts of the show - more so in the second act. That's something I can relate to. Her being a diva? Nope. Her feistiness I can relate to, because when I want something to go well, I get feisty and put everything into it. In those respects we're similar.

What's your favourite part of The Bodyguard story?

The fact that she falls in love with someone who she never expected to. I'm a sucker for love stories, and it's a beautiful moment when she realises that there's more to life than her career. Love can be the answer too. That's definitely one of my favourite parts.

The show comes to Wolverhampton, Stoke-on-Trent, Birmingham, Nottingham and Leicester. Do you enjoy your time when touring in the Midlands?

Yeah! I enjoy my time, or try to, everywhere I go - simply because I don't get the chance to visit these cities very often. I'm doing six shows a week. The only time I'll get to myself is towards the end of the week, when I'll chance going out and stuff. But yes, I'm really excited to be coming back to Birmingham. And Wolverhampton I can't wait for!

Zoe Birkett will be stepping in for matinee performances and will take the lead in Stoke. What's the chemistry like between the two of you? Do you mirror each other's performances?

We're really good friends, and it's so lovely that we get along. Our portrayals are different but we put the same amount of energy into the show. I love her interpretation of Rachel. Learning this part together has been a really nice, fun and enjoyable experience. We support one another, and long may that continue.

Will musical theatre continue to play a big part in your career?

Who knows? Music is my priority. I'm releasing a free EP called Renegade for my fans. It's just a thank you for their time and patience whilst I'm doing other projects. It just depends on what the project is, really.

Is there a particular role that you'd love to play?

If something like Motown came to London, or Dreamgirls or The Color Purple, I'd absolutely jump at the chance to audition.

How about releasing new material? Have you got another album in the pipeline?

That's the reason I'm taking the month of May off, away from the musical. I'm off to New York to record an album. Yes, there'll be a new album out soon. I'm not quite sure whether it'll be at the end of this year or the beginning of next. It all depends on when I can dedicate the time to promote it.

And how about a tour?

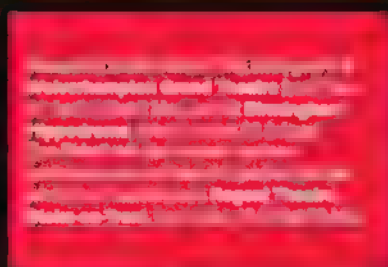
Absolutely. I'm talking with my agent about a tour next year. I'm doing two dates in September at the Jazz Café in London. Those are just a taster of what the new album's like.

You've achieved so much during the past seven years. What's been the highlight?

It probably has to be having my own sell-out tour. And this Bodyguard tour, actually. It's done a lot for my happiness, and it gives me the opportunity to show how much I love acting.

What single piece of advice would you give to someone considering auditioning for The X Factor?

Just be yourself. The camera can always pick up when someone isn't who they say they are. You need to stick to who you are. Oh, and know what you want too.



BIRMINGHAM PRIDE

Spreading the message: Freedom - Together United



SAT 23 & SUN 24 MAY - SPRING BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND

After last year's massively successful Birmingham Pride, the city is now gearing up for the 2015 event, which takes place over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend of Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 May.

This year's Pride theme is Freedom. Together United, in recognition of how much more can be achieved by coming together.

The weekend-long festival kicks off with a Carnival Parade, starting in Victoria Square at 12pm on Saturday the 23rd. The colourful procession

will be led by Lesbians & Gays

Support The Miners (LGSM) - the same group that inspired last year's hit movie, Pride.

As usual there'll be plenty to see and do at Birmingham Pride across the Spring Bank Holiday weekend, with over 100 acts and DJs appearing across the Main Stage, Dance Arena, Cabaret Marquee and Women's Arena.

Performers who've already been confirmed to appear include Hold My Hand star Jess Glynne, Example, Boney M, Jimmy Somerville and Marvin Humes' latest group, Luvbug.

ADVANCE DAY TICKETS £14
WEEKEND TICKETS £20 WHILE STOCKS LAST! (SUBJECT TO BOOKING FEES)

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM GAY VENUES AND www.birminghampride.com

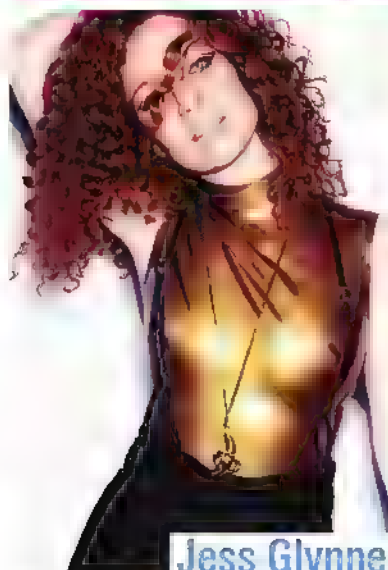
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Jess Glynn



Example



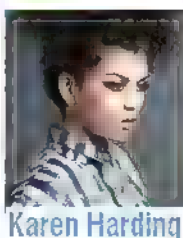
Fuse ODG



Jimmy Somerville



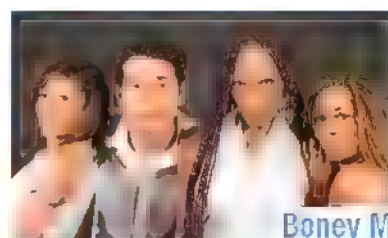
Marvin Humes' LuvBug



Karen Harding



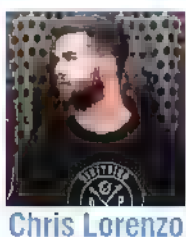
Becky Hill



Boney M



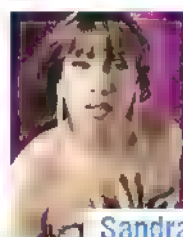
Kelli-Leigh



Chris Lorenzo



Dave Lynn



Sandra



Drag With No Name



Baga Chipz



Cabaret Marquee



Women's Arena



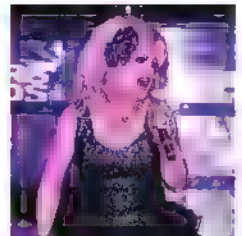
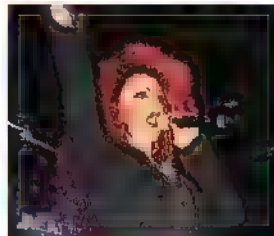
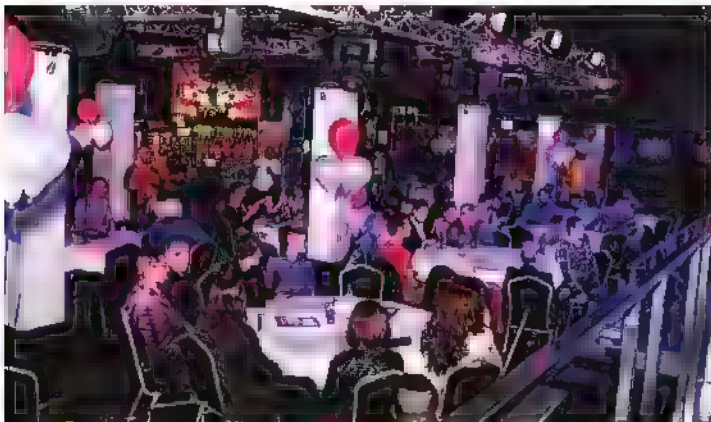
Funfair

ZONE Readers' Awards 2015

With a record-breaking number of votes cast - all of which were counted and independently verified - we can now reveal the results of the Midlands Zone Readers' Awards 2015.

The presentation of the awards took place at the Nightingale Club, in the heart of Birmingham's Gay Village, on Friday 20 March. Over the next few pages you can check out the winners, each pictured

with their award, as well as the breakdown of the voting in each category. Congratulations to all the nominees and winners - and a big thank you to them for all their hard work!



And YOUR winners are...

Best Midlands Pride Event



WINNER

■ **Birmingham Pride**

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Leicester Pride**

■ **Nottinghamshire Pride**

■ **Stoke Pride**

■ **Wolves Pride**

58%

20%

12%

8%

2%

Best Midlands One-Nighter



WINNER

■ **XXL @ The Core**

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **So It Goes @ The Nightingale**

■ **La Voix @ Eden**

■ **Big Saturday Night Out @ Nightingale**

■ **Breakfast Club @ Club Chic**

25%

24%

19%

17%

15%

Best Front of House Person



WINNER

■ **Garry Prentice - Eden**

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Max Chapman - Missing**

■ **Hilli Rishworth - The Fox**

■ **Ollie Betts - Missing**

■ **Alice Johnson - The Nightingale**

41%

24%

21%

11%

3%

Best Sauna/Health Club



WINNER

■ **The Greenhouse - Darlaston** 32%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Unit 2 - Birmingham** 28%
 ■ **CS2 - Nottingham** 17%
 ■ **Heroes - Stourbridge** 12%
 ■ **Splash - Leicester** 11%

Best Venue for Men



WINNER

■ **Eden - Birmingham** 35%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Boltz Club - Birmingham** 25%
 ■ **The Fountain - Birmingham** 17%
 ■ **The Nightingale - Birmingham** 12%
 ■ **The Core - Birmingham** 11%

Best Venue for Women



WINNER

■ **The Fox - Birmingham** 41%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Gossip - Stoke-On-Trent** 23%
 ■ **The Nightingale - Birmingham** 22%
 ■ **Sidewalk - Birmingham** 8%
 ■ **New Foresters - Nottingham** 6%

Best Café Bar/Restaurant



WINNER

■ **The Loft Lounge - Birmingham** 39%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Sidewalk - Birmingham** 31%
 ■ **Rainbow & Dove - Leicester** 15%
 ■ **Bond Street Tavern - W'hampton** 8%
 ■ **Matchbox Café - Birmingham** 7%

Best Community Venue



WINNER

■ **Eden - Birmingham** 43%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Equator - Birmingham** 21%
 ■ **The Wellington - Birmingham** 14%
 ■ **Sloanes - Leicester** 13%
 ■ **The White Hart - W'hampton** 9%

Best Outdoor Area



WINNER

■ **The Loft Lounge - Birmingham** 33%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Eden - Birmingham** 21%
 ■ **The Lion - Walsall** 19%
 ■ **The Fox - Birmingham** 15%
 ■ **Rainbow & Dove - Leicester** 12%

Best Security Team



WINNER

■ **The Nightingale - Birmingham** 26%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Sidewalk - Birmingham** 24%
 ■ **Eden - Birmingham** 23%
 ■ **Missing - Birmingham** 20%
 ■ **Club Chic - Birmingham** 7%

Best Front of House Team



WINNER

■ **Eden - Birmingham** 44%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **The Nightingale - Birmingham** 19%
 ■ **Equator - Birmingham** 15%
 ■ **The Loft Lounge - Birmingham** 14%
 ■ **Gossip - Stoke-On-Trent** 8%

Best New/Refurbished Venue



WINNER

■ **Gossip - Stoke-On-Trent** 58%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **The Lion - Walsall** 15%
 ■ **LGBT Centre - Leicester** 12%
 ■ **Aceface Barbers - Birmingham** 9%
 ■ **Bond Street Tavern - W'hampton** 6%

Best Live Entertainment Venue



WINNER

■ **The Village Inn - Birmingham** 39%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **The Nightingale - Birmingham** 32%

■ **Eden - Birmingham** 22%

■ **The Lion - Walsall** 4%

■ **The White Hart - Wolverhampton** 3%

Best Midlands LGBT Event



WINNER

■ **SHOUT Festival** 29%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **L Fest** 24%

■ **Rainbow Film Festival** 22%

■ **Pride in Sport** 20%

■ **Pink Picnic** 5%

Best Midlands Gay Bar



WINNER

■ **The Lion - Walsall** 27%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Dover Castle - Leicester** 24%

■ **The White Hart - Wolverhampton** 18%

■ **Rainbows - Coventry** 17%

■ **Pink - Stoke-On-Trent** 14%

Best Birmingham Gay Bar



WINNER

■ **The Village Inn** 29%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Eden** 28%

■ **Missing** 20%

■ **Sidewalk** 12%

■ **The Loft Lounge** 11%

Best Midlands Gay Club



WINNER

■ **Gorgeous - Wolverhampton** 28%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **The Lion - Walsall** 24%

■ **Gossip - Stoke-On-Trent** 22%

■ **Helsinki - Leicester** 19%

■ **NG1 - Nottingham** 7%

Best Birmingham Gay Club



WINNER

■ **The Nightingale** 75%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Club Chic** 12%

■ **The Village Underground** 7%

■ **The Core** 4%

■ **Boltz** 2%

Best Midlands Overall Venue



WINNER

■ **Gorgeous - Wolverhampton** 29%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **The Lion - Walsall** 23%

■ **Gossip - Stoke-On-Trent** 22%

■ **Dover Castle - Leicester** 18%

■ **NG1 - Nottingham** 8%

Best Birmingham Overall Gay Venue



WINNER

■ **The Nightingale** 39%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Eden** 31%

■ **The Village Inn** 15%

■ **The Loft Lounge** 11%

■ **Missing** 4%

Best Charity or Group of Achievement



WINNER

■ **Birmingham LGBT** 65%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Healthy Gay Life** 14%

■ **LGBT Network Wolverhampton** 13%

■ **Freshwinds** 5%

■ **AB+** 3%

Best LGBT Sport or Social Group



WINNER

■ **Birmingham Bulls RFC** 35%

Other Top 5 Nominees.

■ Acting Out	19%
■ Rainbow Voices	17%
■ Birmingham Blaze FC	16%
■ Leicester Wildcats	13%

Best Retail/Online Store



WINNER

■ **Clone Zone** 38%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ Prowler Online	21%
■ Tesco Express (Hurst Street)	19%
■ Selfridges	15%
■ Aceface Barbers	7%

Best Venue Security Person



WINNER

■ **Mark Smith - Sidewalk** 27%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ Kevin Pearson - Missing	24%
■ Jermaine Holder - Eden	22%
■ Toni Whetter - The Village Inn	20%
■ Wayne Millwood - The White Hart	7%

Best Bar DJ



WINNER

■ **Dan Williams - Eden** 27%

Other Top 5 Nominees.

■ Mykee Mackenzie - Missing	26%
■ Deano Trickett - The Village Inn	25%
■ Destiny Dyson - Gossip	12%
■ Rob Lambeth - Dover Castle	10%

Best Club DJ



WINNER

■ **Corey Hadley - The Nightingale** 24%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ Rob Lambeth - Helsinki	23%
■ Michael Felton - The Nightingale	20%
■ Simon Baker - The Nightingale	19%
■ Marcus James - Club Chic	14%

Best Compere/Host



WINNER

■ **Marty Smith** 29%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ Charlotte the Harlotte	24%
■ Miss Penny	20%
■ Twiggy	19%
■ Candy Fierce	8%

Best Cabaret Act



WINNER:

■ **Miss Penny** 25%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ La Voix	23%
■ Sandra	19%
■ Glitter Lips	18%
■ Vicky Jackson	15%

Scene Personality of the Year



WINNER

■ **Lawrence Barton** 39%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ Twiggy	18%
■ Garry Prentice	16%
■ Steph Keeble	14%
■ Marty Smith	13%

And the winner is...

We'd like to thank everyone who voted in the Midlands Zone Readers' Awards 2015 and also those who completed our Readership Survey. The winner of a holiday for two to Gran Canaria is

Lisa Schilling



GET
AHEAD
OF THE
TREND



With fashion very much at the heart of our day-to-day lives, we've scoured the high street stores to find some of the latest trendsetting items. Here are just a few of our favourites...

01 Red Lightweight Casual Coach Jacket

The simple design of this lightweight red coach jacket gives it a clean and contemporary look. Embellished just with a popper front and drawstring waist, it's an easy way to smarten your everyday look.

£48
www.riverisland.com

02 Dark Wash Holloway Road Slim Jeans

With printed internal trims and feature fly buttons, these dark wash jeans from Holloway Road showcase the label's signature attention to detail.

£48
www.riverisland.com

03 Red Tartan Check Long-Sleeve Shirt

A sartorial classic, this red tartan checked shirt will become the cornerstone of your year-round look. With a button down collar, it'll take your style to smart new levels.

£28
www.riverisland.com

04 Jacket Slim Fit
Jacket in a linen and cotton weave with pockets at the front, a breast pocket, buttons at the cuffs and a vent at the back. Lined at the top. Slim fit.

£39.99
www.hm.com

05 Linen Blend Hat
Hat in a linen and cotton weave with a grosgrain band and concealed elastication on the inside.

£7.99
www.hm.com

06 Light Pink Slim Fit Chinos

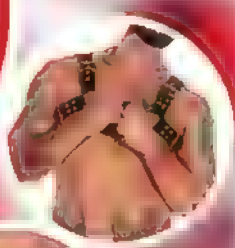
Chinos in washed cotton twill with slim legs, side pockets, one coin pocket, and welt pockets with a button at the back.

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announce that the
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01

**01 Apple MacBook**

The new Apple MacBook has been engineered to fit a full-size laptop experience into the lightest and most compact Mac notebook ever. Just 13.1mm thin, the all-new MacBook is the future. It has a stunning 12-inch Retina Display too – a beautiful way to view your photos and videos. There are even new colour options – with silver, gold and space grey now available.

From £1,049www.apple.co.uk

02

**02 Apple Watch**

Apple Watch represents a new chapter in the relationship people have with technology. It's the most personal product Apple have ever made because it's their first one designed to be worn.

From £299www.apple.co.uk**03 Pebble Time**

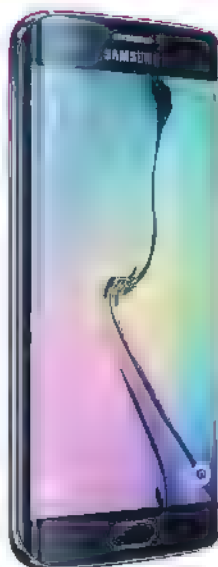
The runaway success of the original crowd-funded Pebble is the basis for this brand new iteration of one of the simplest



smartwatches ever. Now with a colour e-paper smartwatch with up to seven days of battery and a new timeline interface that highlights what's important in your day, it's a product worth getting your hands on!

From \$159www.getpebble.com**04 Samsung Galaxy S6 Edge**

With its slim, seamless full metal and glass construction, the sleek, dual-curved Galaxy S6 edge is crafted from the



05



finest materials. And whilst it may be the thinnest smartphone Samsung have ever created, when it comes to cutting-edge technology and flagship Galaxy experience, this 5.1" QHD Super AMOLED smartphone is certainly no lightweight.

From Freecarphonewarehouse.co.uk**05 HTC One M9**

Whilst the HTC One M9 may look pretty similar to its M8 predecessor, it's certainly worth the upgrade! Packing in

a 20MP camera on the rear and a UltraPixel front camera, this is a smartphone that's up there with the best! HTC have even partnered with Dolby to recreate the amazing 5.1 surround-sound experience.

From Freewww.three.co.uk

HOT NEW TECH!

NHS

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Date: Every Tuesday

Time: 3pm - 6pm

Place: Celts Narborough



City Celts Sauna Clinic:

Date: Every Wednesday

Time: 3pm - 5pm

Place:

Street, Leicester, LE1 1AR

Splash Spa & Leisure Clinic:

Date: Every Friday

Time: 3pm - 6pm

Place: Splash Spa & Leisure 51 Beckett

Street, Leicester, LE1 3JR

You can also check out **Trade Sexual Health**
www.tradesexualhealth.com

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 Gaylife
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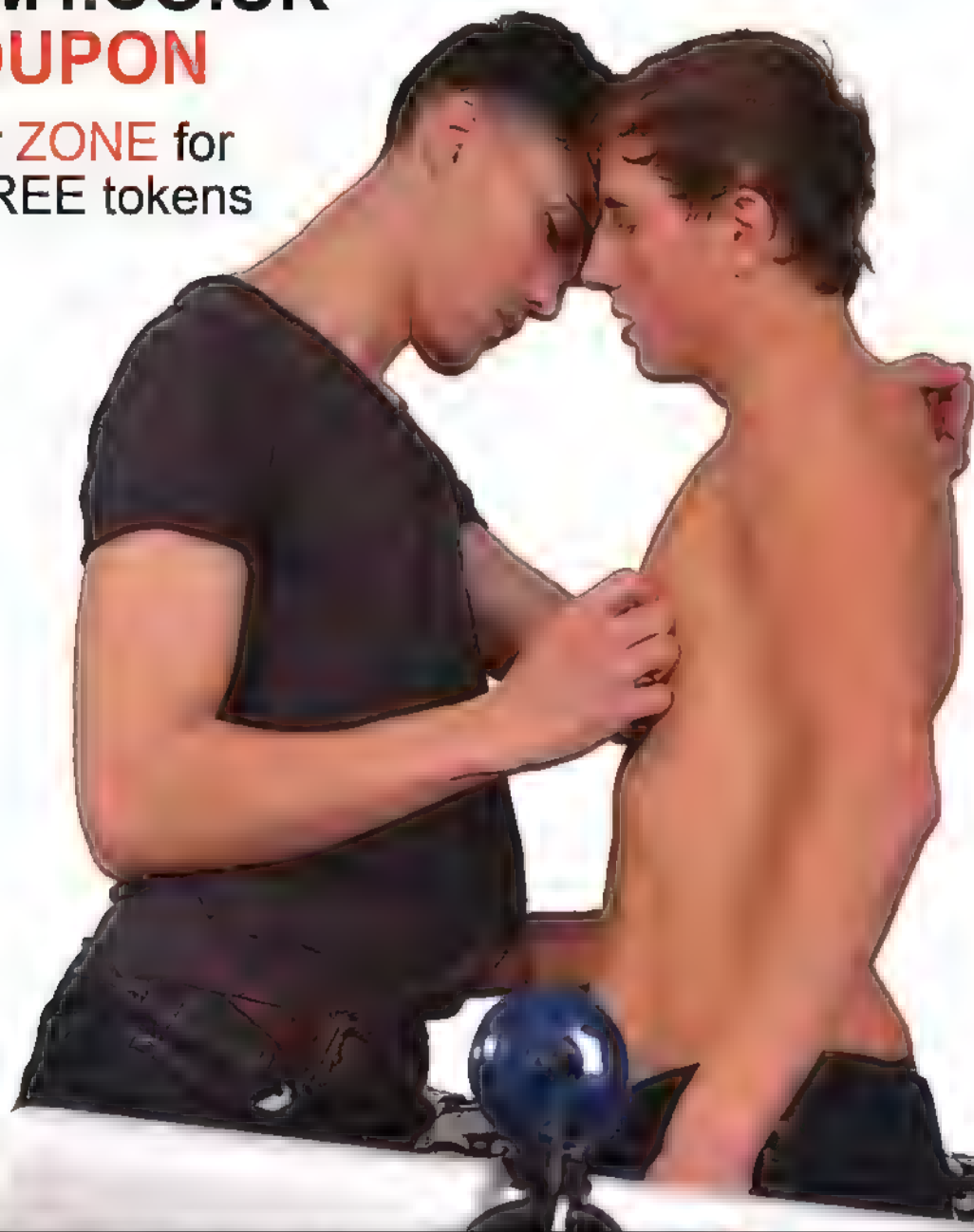
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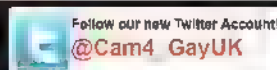
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01



02



03



Nifty

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04



05



01 Set of three Britannia Cushions
Designer cushions featuring a Union Jack, a First Class stamp and the Queen's head add a funky twist to a series of British design classics. **£135**
www.swankymaison.com

02 Dove Grey Gallery Wall Clock
An attractive, classic-styled large wall clock featuring Roman numerals and a dove-grey enameled surround. **£42**
www.lauraashley.com

03 Set Of Four Oslo Ribbed Glass Votive
Grey-tinted votive holders have tall, shiny, nickel-plated stems holding elegant silver grey ribbed glass candle bowls. The texture on these teatight goblets will brighten your surroundings. **£79**
www.artsanti.com

04 Portsmouth Wooden TV Cabinet Unit
With two cupboards and one drawer. With a distressed finish and brass-effect handle and knobs. **£349.95**
www.melodymason.co.uk

05 Calabria Grey Rattan Furniture
These contemporary sofa sets are woven in a beautiful stone grey textured rattan, complemented with a soft grey cushion fabric. **£595**
www.alexander-francis.co.uk

WIN!

WIN! A pair of tickets to Beautiful Thing!

Jonathan Harvey's award-winning play tells the story of teenager Jamie's relationship with his classmate and neighbour, Ste...

Numerous well-known actors have appeared in Beautiful Thing during its twenty-year history among them Jonny Lee Miller, Suranne Jones, Hugh Bonneville, Philip Glenister, Andrew Garfield and Rhys Ifans. Productions of the show have been mounted in countries including China, France, Canada, Australia and Holland.

EastEnders actors Charlie Brooks and Thomas Law star in this latest version of the play, and are joined by Sam Thomas from Channel Four's hit teen

drama, Skins

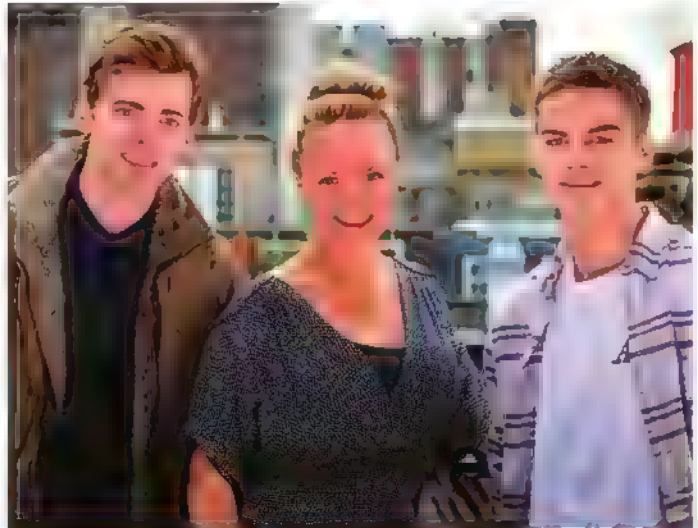
We've teamed up with Nottingham Playhouse to give one lucky reader the chance to win a pair of tickets for the Tuesday 21 April performance of Beautiful Thing, subject to availability.

For your chance to win the tickets, visit www.midlandszone.co.uk and answer the following question.

Who wrote Beautiful Thing?

- A) Jonathan Harvey
- B) Tom Stoppard
- C) Laura Wade

Beautiful Thing runs at Nottingham Playhouse from Tuesday 21 April until Saturday 9 May



Enter this great competition online at www.midlandszone.co.uk before Friday 11 April



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WHAT'S ON IN YOUR LOCAL GAY VENUES

SCENE

APRIL 2015

YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE

GAY CLUBBING IN THE MIDLANDS

DRAG IDOL IS BACK!

The annual drag competition returns to the Midlands this month!

FABULOUS IN BRUM!

The Core Club announces an exciting new Saturday club night!

HEAD BACK TO THE NOUGHTIES!

Birmingham's Nightingale Club hosts a night of music from the first decade of the 21st century!

THE BIGGEST GAY MONDAY NIGHT IN THE MIDLANDS!

just got BIGGER!

NEW!
RESIDENT
HOST
MISS MARTY
EVERY MONDAY

PLAY ALONG
WITH MARTY...
QUICK FIRE BINGO PARTY
GAMES & GIVEAWAYS
GALORE FROM 10PM!

FREE ENTRY
BEFORE
MIDNIGHT!
10PM - 3AM

Fabulous

Join Birmingham's award-winning Marty -
The Girl That Likes to Party -
EVERY MONDAY from 10pm

PLUS: The ALL NEW
Happy Hour from 10pm!
PLUS drinks from £1 ALL NIGHT!

Barbie Bombs - Just £1.50
Buy 2 Large glasses of
House Wine and get the rest
of the bottle free!



MONDAY 6 APRIL
VICKY JACKSON
AS PINK

MONDAY 4 MAY
DRAG WITH
NO NAME

C:21

Live cabaret at Shrewsbury's C:21 with VICKY JACKSON

Monday nights at C:21 in Shrewsbury is one of the biggest gay nights in the West Midlands. The first Monday of every month sees the popular venue hosting live cabaret, with April's spot being filled by Vicky Jackson, this time as Pink! Not only that, every Monday night throughout the month sees Marty the girl who likes to party, taking to the stage for fun and games aplenty!



BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS AT BRUM BAR

When you've finished work for the day, instead of heading straight home, why not pop into The Loft Lounge in Birmingham for a cheeky cocktail or two? Selected cocktails are two-for-one all day and night between Sunday and Friday! Booom! THE LOFT LOUNGE - BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS Sunday to Friday All day & night Wind down after work with a cocktail or two THE LOFT LOUNGE

MINISTRY OF POUND with DJ Mike Emery from 9pm. Selected drinks £1 Open until 2am MISSING BAR

PLAY YOUR CARDS RIGHT with Mrs Mills and DJ Deano Cash prizes and free drinks Happy Hour 12noon-10pm. THE VILLAGE INN

POUNDED Come and get Pounded from 6pm onwards £1

IT'S THE MINISTRY OF POUND AT MISSING!

Birmingham's popular Missing Bar on Hurst Street brings you Pounded each and every Monday. From 9pm onwards, you can get your hands on selected drinks from £1. Spirits, beer, bottles - you name it, it's on offer!

on selected spirits. £1.50 Jagerbomb / Carling Strongbow / Sambucca SIDEWALK

SUGAR RUSH £2 entry drinks from £2 various DJs NIGHTINGALE CLUB

MONDAY MADNESS Weekly drink offers with DJ Matt Happy Hour until 2am. Open 10pm-Late BAR JESTER

OUTSKIRTS 1st & 3rd Monday Open 10pm-Late BAR JESTER

FABULOUS Fun & Games with resident host Marty (The girl who likes to party) **Mon 6 Apr** - Live cabaret with Vicky Jackson as Pink. Free

admission before midnight and just £3 after Great drinks offers all night long with drinks starting at just £1

C:21, SHREWSBURY

THE MONDAY CLUB 9pm-5am Student night Everything is £2 (Shots £1) with DJ Lee Edward **GORGEOUS, WOLVERHAMPTON**

CHILLAX any cheap drink

THE WHITE HART

CHILL NIGHT with Karaoke **THREE FURNACES, Telford**

GET THE PARTY STARTED Free admission with DJ F... Open 5pm-4am **GOSSIP, STONE ON TRENT**

STUDENT NIGHT Free admission all drinks £1.50 before midnight **PINK, STONE ON TRENT**

EAST MIDLANDS

2 TILL 2 Open from 2pm till 2am for a quiet drink in a friend

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

DISCO 7pm-midnight **NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM**

FOR £10

If you're looking for a meal before your night out, don't bother working up a sweat in your own kitchen, creating loads of mess to tidy up. Instead, head to Sidewalk in Birmingham. They have a cracking 'two meals for a tanner' menu - great for you and a mate to enjoy, setting you up for a top night on the town.

TWO MEALS



90's NIGHT - Every Tuesday night 10.30pm-3am **NIGHTINGALE CLUB**

TAKE A TRIP BACK IN TIME WITH '90s NIGHT

The 1990s - the decade when we were introduced to the Spice Girls and many more fantastic pop groups. Re-live it by heading to The Nightingale's '90s night. You'll love it for sure! **THE NIGHTINGALE - BIRMINGHAM**

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS - Sunday to Friday All day & night Wind down after work with a cocktail or two **THE LOFT LOUNGE**

KARAOKE TIME AT MISSING BAR

Everyone loves a bit of karaoke in their lives - so head to Missing Bar in Birmingham and join DJ James from 9pm till late. Whether you're good or bad at singing, it's great fun - so go on, grab the mic! **MISSING - BIRMINGHAM**

MISSING KARAOKE With your host

DJ James. Party starts at 9pm till late **MISSING BAR**

TACKY TUESDAYS

Birmingham gay scene favourites Miss Penny and Charlotte the Harlot offer a night of fun and games every Tuesday at The Village Inn. There are laughs and prizes galore! Go on, enjoy it!

TACKY TUESDAYS with Charlotte and Miss Penny Songs, Games & Prizes. Happy Hour 12noon-10pm **THE VILLAGE INN**

TUNE UP TUESDAY with Baby G Happy Hour until 2am Happy Hour until 2am. Open 10pm-Late **THE VILLAGE INN**

BIG TUESDAY NIGHT PARTY Quids

THE LION BAR & CLUB, WALSALL

CAMP QUIZ with free buffet Quizzes & Jigs **THREE FURNACES, Telford**

DIVERSITY Weekly day night with DJ Jay playing everything from pop & hip hop to indie **VELVET, WORCESTER**

FLAUNT A twist of awesome to suit everyone **BREWERY BAR, WORCESTER**

SAMMIE'S SINGERS Karaoke night **THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON**

TWISTED TUESDAYS Hosted by Cherry Daring Open 9pm-3am **RAINBOWS, COVENTRY**

2 TILL 2 Open from 2pm till 2am for a quiet drink in a friend

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

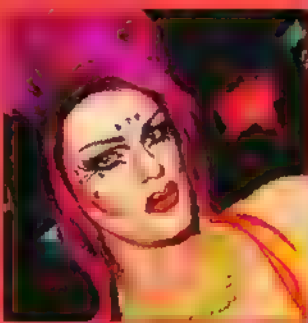
CHILL OUT NIGHT Karaoke **NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM**

GAMES NIGHT Free Pool & Nintendo Wii from 8pm **DOVER CASTLE, LEICESTER**

SING A SONG with Charlotte the Harlotte at The Village Inn

If you think you've got a singing voice to rival Beyoncé, Elton John or Gary Barlow, then pop along to Birmingham's Village Inn and show it off to Charlotte the Harlotte and DJ Deano. Whilst you may not walk away with a multi-million pound recording contract with Simon Cowell, you can walk away with a sense of pride - well, or embarrassment, depending on how you've done!

THE VILLAGE INN - BIRMINGHAM



BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS Shake your tail feathers at Sidewalks new 2 for 1 cocktail menu.

SIDEWALKS

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS - Sunday to Friday. All day & night. Wind down after work with a cocktail or two.

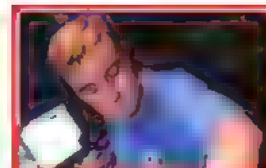
THE LOFT LOUNGE

2 GOOD 2 MISS Drinks from just £2 with DJ Mike Emery.

IT'S COCKTAIL TIME AT THE LOFT LOUNGE!

Rather than heading out for a pint or a double vodka and coke, why not opt for a cocktail? Or better still, how about two? The Loft Lounge in Birmingham is offering two gorgeous cocktails for the price of one! If you're hungry, why not grab a bite to eat as well?

THE LOFT LOUNGE - BIRMINGHAM



IT'S MISSING AT MISSING

Missing Bar in Birmingham certainly knows how to throw an awesome party, regardless of which day of the week it is! Pop in for a night of top fun, great tunes and cheap drinks in the company of DJ Mike Emery and the rest of the venue's team.

MISSING - BIRMINGHAM

MISSING BAR

C FACTOR - with Charlotte the Harlotte.

THE VILLAGE INN

DADDY'S DEALS AND FREE POOL - 7.11!

THE FOX

WACKY WEDNESDAYS - Hosted by DJ Mike Emery.

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

BAR JESTER

WEDNESDAY LINE - Line Dancing.

THE WELLINGTON

WEST MIDLANDS

SONGWRITE CLUB NIGHT

Drinks from £1.50. 8pm - 11pm. £4.50 entry.

THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

WACKY WEDNESDAYS - Karaoke. James Owen 9pm-midnight.

RAINBOWS, COVENTRY

EAST MIDLANDS

GAMES NIGHT - Free Pool 10pm.

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM

KARAOKE 5pm - 11pm. £2.50.

from 8pm till 11pm. Free £1.

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

OUT - Everyone's Out! Free entry for students. £1 drinks.

NG1, NOTTINGHAM

GAMES NIGHT AT THE NEW FORESTERS

If you're looking for something to do in Nottingham on a Wednesday night, then head down to The New Foresters for free pool and cheap drink!

THE NEW FORESTERS - NOTTS

SHOOT EXCHANGE

The Core Club is dubbing its brand new Shoot Exchange the best Thursday night out in Birmingham. Shoot Exchange sees 'price crash' drinks starting at just £1 every Thursday night. The weekly event runs from 10pm till 3am - and if you're one of the first 25 people through the door, you get free entry! You can find exclusive 'insider' price crash tips on Twitter too!



BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS - Sunday to Friday. All day & night. Wind down after work with a cocktail or two.

THE LOFT LOUNGE

CHARLIE HIDES Thurs 30 Apr. Live cabaret with TV and internet star Charlie Hides.

EDEN

CULT - Bringing dirty house back home. Top Floor from 10pm.

NIGHTINGALE CLUB

DRAG IDOL - The annual Drag Idol.

competition returns this month with the Birmingham heats being held at the city's popular Missing Bar. Show the judges what you've got on Thurs 16th, 23rd and 30th.

MISSING BAR

DJ DEANO - On the decks. Happy Hour 12noon-2am.

THE VILLAGE INN

DROP THE BOMB - start of your weekend. £1.50 on all bombs (excluding the Gutterbomb) with our resident DJ Rowan.

THE VILLAGE INN

I <3 THE 90S - with DJ Dan. Open

from 6pm.

EDEN BAR

LA VOIX Thurs 9 Apr. Live cabaret with Britain's Got Talent star La Voix and her Va Va Voom boys.

EDEN

MISS MARTY'S MADHOUSE

Songs, Games and Happy Hour until 2am. With Miss Marty and DJ Deano.

THE VILLAGE INN

GET POUNDED AT THE NIGHTINGALE

Every Thursday sees the students of Birmingham's gay scene head down to The Nightingale for the biggest party in the city. Cheap drinks and £5 entry is a great start to this incredible night out!

POUNDED - £5 entry. Drinks from a £1. DJ Corey playing chart, dance and urban on Ground Floor. Miss Marty and DJ Craig with all the pop and cheese you could ask for on the middle floor.

NIGHTINGALE CLUB

THROWBACK THURSDAY - £1.20 bombs. With DJ Mykeel. (Closed Christmas Day - Thu 25th Dec.)

MISSING BAR

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

THE FOX

PARTY POP - Free entry. 10pm.

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

BAR JESTER

WEST MIDLANDS

MAD COW - Get mooovin' and groovin'. Drinks from £1 and Element 105 on the decks.

GORGEOUS, WOLVES

CAMP KARAOKE - and cabaret.

THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

THE KARAOKE LOUNGE - Free entry.

Big value drinks. With DJ.

THE LION, WALSLEY

GET OUT - with DJ Teja.

THE BELL, STOURBRIDGE

MOSES MADNESS - A night of fun & games.

THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

EAST MIDLANDS

2 TILL 2 - Open from 2pm.

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

THE CORE PRESENTS

LAUNCHING THURSDAY 2ND APRIL



SHOT EXCHANGE

FIRST 25 PEOPLE GET FREE ENTRY

THE BEST THURSDAY NIGHT OUT IN BIRMINGHAM
EVERY THURSDAY NIGHT

FREE
LAUNCH
ENTRY

PRICE
CRASH
DRINKS FROM

£1

10PM
UNTIL
3AM

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the
core

XXL brings all the bears to the yard in Birmingham

Every third Friday of the month sees the Midlands' biggest men-only night take place at The Core Club in Birmingham. Join DJ Christian M for a great night out with the men of the Midlands on Friday the 17th.



BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS - Sunday to Friday. A day & night. Wind down after work with a cocktail or two. **THE LOFT LOUNGE**

ALL DAY EVERY DAY PRICES - D. Parram takes over the weekend by playing the best of club classics house, R&B and all your favourites. Enjoy all day every day prices too. **SIDEWALK**

DJ JAMES HOSTS A NIGHT OF PARTY TUNES

Every Friday sees Birmingham's Missing Bar hosting a night of party anthems. Join DJ James from 9pm till late and blast out some of your favourite songs over the speakers! Don't forget - there are great drinks offers too!

MISSING - BIRMINGHAM

BIG GAY FRIDAY - Party anthems all night long with Missing's DJ James. Open until the early hours. **MISSING BAR**

DISCO & KARAOKE with DJ Nikk. **THE LOFT LOUNGE**

FREAKY FRIDAY with D. Loity. Big name cabaret at midnight. Open until 6am. **Fri 3 Apr** Kelly Wilde. **Fri 10 Apr** Drag With No Name. **Fri 17 Apr** Baga Chipz. **Fri 24 Apr** Sandra. **THE VILLAGE INN**

INFUSION - Free Entry. Absolute Anthems and Floor Fillers with DJ Corey. Drinks from £2. Admission £2. **NIGHTINGALE CLUB**

MIDSBEAR MEET-UP AT EDEN BAR

Friday 17 April sees the monthly Midsbears meet-up take place at Birmingham's Eden Bar. If you've not been before, it's a monthly social group for Bears and their admirers. It's a great night out, so be sure to pop along!

EDEN - BIRMINGHAM

KICK START - Kick start the weekend from 9pm till the early hours. Hosted by James. **MISSING BAR**

LBR - With Charlotte the Harlot. Open until 6am every Friday. **THE VILLAGE INN**



LIP GLOSS

The first Friday of every month (3 April) sees Birmingham's trans* community, their friends and admirers come together for a night of fun at the city's popular Eden Bar. So grab a friend and pop along for a fun night!

LIP GLOSS - Fri 3 Apr - With new host, Miss Penny. Live entertainment from Sam Buca and stripper Extreme. **THE LOFT LOUNGE**

MIDSBARS - Fri 17 Apr - Monthly meet up and social group for Bears and Admirers. **EDEN BAR**

OLD SKOOL GARAGE - The first



INFUSION

Join DJ Corey every Friday night for Infusion. Corey will be playing the best anthems and floorfillers on the scene. Drinks are from £2 all night long - and it's £2 entry all night long too!

Friday of the month sees the Nightingale go back in time - playing some of the best old skool garage. A night not to be missed. **NIGHTINGALE CLUB**

SAATHI - Fri 24 Apr - Every last Friday monthly. South Asian Gay and Lesbian club night. Bollywood and Bhangra. **NIGHTINGALE CLUB**

SING STAR SUPERSTAR with DJ Nikk every Friday - your chance to win cash! **THE LOFT LOUNGE**

VINTAGE FRIDAYS AT THE LOFT LOUNGE

If you're into a bit of old school music, head down to The Loft Lounge in Birmingham every Friday night for a hot helping of Motown, Northern Soul, funk, rock and all of your classic favourites.

VINTAGE FRIDAYS - a night of soul, funk, rock, motown, Northern Soul and all the classic favourites. **THE LOFT LOUNGE**

XXL - Fri 17 Apr - Men only night with DJ Christian M. Early Bear offers until 11pm. Every 3rd Friday of each month. **THE CORE CLUB**



FUNK'D UP - alternate Saturdays. 10pm till 6am. **THE LOFT LOUNGE**

KARAOKE - D. Star. All weekend. **THE FOX**

BAR JESTER - 10pm till 6am. **BAR JESTER**

WEST MIDLANDS

LUSH & YOLO! 1st Fri monthly. Drinks from £1 until midnight with resident DJs. **GORGEOUS CLUB, WOLVERHAMPTON**

TV PARTY NIGHT - A Men's Night for TVs, Cross Dressers and Admirers. Every Friday night at **THE GREENHOUSE, DARLSTON**

BANG - The big weekend. **THE LOFT LOUNGE**

THE LION, WALSALL

CLUB NIGHT - Drink promos until 11pm. **THE LOFT LOUNGE**

THE THREE FURNACES, Telford

THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

RAINBOWS, COVENTRY

THE BELL, STOURBRIDGE

KARAOKE with D. Shawn and D. M. **THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON**

START THE WEEKEND - Free admission. **THE LOFT LOUNGE**

PINK, STOKE ON TRENT

TFI FRIDAY - 10pm till 6am. **THE LOFT LOUNGE**

BREWERY TAP, WORCESTER

EAST MIDLANDS

CLUB NIGHT with D. R. **THE LOFT LOUNGE**

HELSEINKI, LEICESTER

PINK POUNDER - 10pm till 6am. **THE LOFT LOUNGE**

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

VALUE FRIDAY - Disco 3pm-4am. **THE LOFT LOUNGE**

THE WEEKEND STARTS HERE - Free admission. **THE LOFT LOUNGE**

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

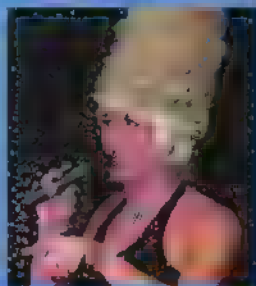
THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

LIFE IS A CABARET at Birmingham's Village Inn

If you're out on a Friday night and looking for some great entertainment, then look no further than Birmingham's award-winning Village Inn. April sees four great acts take to the stage. Kicking off the month's line-up is Kelly Wilde on Friday the 3rd, whilst the following week sees The Drag With No Name dropping in to say hi. Baga Chipz gives it her all on Friday the 17th, with the brilliant Sandra wrapping things up on the 24th.



THE CORE PRESENTS
LAUNCHING
SATURDAY 4TH APRIL

£5
ENTRY
PRICE

fabulous

EVERY SATURDAY NIGHT IN BIRMINGHAM

FIRST 25 PEOPLE GET FREE ENTRY

OPEN FROM 10PM - 3AM, EVERY SATURDAY

HOSTED BY

CHERUB & HALLIE JAMES

HAPPY HOUR UNTIL 11 & PODIUM DANCERS

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Saturdays are **FABULOUS** at Birmingham's Core Club!

The Core Club in Birmingham is turning Saturdays Fabulous with the launch of its brand new weekly club night. The venue is giving you the red carpet treatment, with hosts Cherub and Miss Hallie James keeping you entertained with podium dances and great music.

Entry to Fabulous Saturdays is just £5 all night and doors open from 10pm till 3am. The first 25 customers get free entry too! It's definitely a night out not to be missed!

THE CORE CLUB - BIRMINGHAM



BIRMINGHAM

GO BACK TO THE '00'S FOR ONE NIGHT ONLY!

Saturday 25 April sees a special club night taking place at The Nightingale in Birmingham as the venue steps back in time and parties like it's the Millennium all over again! All music will be from 2000 to 2010 and fancy dress is encouraged! **THE NIGHTINGALE - BIRMINGHAM**

00'S PARTY Sat 25 Apr A whole night dedicated to the music from between 2000 and 2010! **THE NIGHTINGALE**

DJ DAN TAKES YOU BACK TO THE '80s

If you fancy turning back the clock thirty-odd years, then head down to Eden Bar in Birmingham, where DJ Dan takes it back to the 1980s. Expect some of the biggest tunes from the decade, not to mention cheap drinks promotions! **EDEN - BIRMINGHAM**

80S HITS with DJ Dan from 2am it's back to the 80s with cheap drink promotions **EDEN BAR**

THE ATTIC Available for hire. Call the venue for more info: 0121 622 4266 **THE ATTIC**

BEARBRUM Sat 11 Apr It's back!

BEARBRUM MAKES A WELCOME RETURN

It's back at last! One of Birmingham's best-loved men's events returns to Eden's marquee for a night of all things bears! There's a bigger bar, exclusive offers and a fantastic atmosphere for all of you to enjoy! **EDEN - BIRMINGHAM**

The men's night returns to Eden's newly refurbished marquee with a bigger bar and exclusive offers **EDEN**

BIANCA DEL RIO Sat 4 Apr The R.Paul's Drag Race star live on stage **THE NIGHTINGALE**

IT'S SATURDAY NIGHT AT THE VILLAGE INN

Saturday is without doubt the biggest night of the week at The Village Inn in Birmingham. You've got two floors of partying and a great range of music to enjoy too. You'd be mad not to pop in and party the night away! **THE VILLAGE INN - BIRMINGHAM**

BIG SATURDAY NIGHT OUT Over 2 floors. 3 Djs. Open til 8am. With DJ Lotty & DJ Richard Moon. With DJ Tonie in The Village Underground **THE VILLAGE INN**

BIG SATURDAY NIGHT OUT Every Saturday, with loads of drinks promotions. **THE VILLAGE INN**

CULT Bringing dirty house back home. Top Floor from 10pm **THE VILLAGE INN**

FABULOUS SATURDAYS Get the red carpet treatment with your host and hostess Cherub and Miss Hallie James, keeping you entertained with podium dances and fantastic music. Entry £5 - 10pm until 3am with the first 25 customers having FREE ENTRY **THE CORE CLUB**

KARAOKE & COCKTAILS in The Attic, plus music from across the decades **THE ATTIC**

LBR With Charlotte the Harlot! Open until 8am every Saturday **THE VILLAGE INN**

MARY MAC Sat 25 Apr Live cabaret from the amazing Mary Mac **EDEN**

QUEENS OF POP POP BACK TO BRUM!

Controversial Mancunian drag duo Queens Of Pop are back in Birmingham on 4 April. They're best known for their Kerry Katona parody - and rightly so - but they've got so much more in their locker that'll also get you howling! **EDEN - BIRMINGHAM**

QUEENS OF POP Sat 4 Apr The controversial Mancunian drag duo Queens of Pop return to Eden **EDEN**

SATURDAY NIGHT PARTY with DJ Mykee playing the best party tunes. Featuring Twiggy and sexy door boys. Open until 4am **EDEN BAR**

SATURDAY SESSIONS WITH SIMON BAKER

Every Saturday night sees veteran DJ Simon Baker take to the decks at The Loft Lounge in Birmingham, ensuring your evening gets off to a great start. It's the perfect way to relax - or to get the party started! **THE LOFT LOUNGE - BIRMINGHAM**

SATURDAY SESSIONS With DJ Simon Baker from 8pm **THE LOFT LOUNGE**

SATURS-FACTION Welcome in the weekend with resident DJ, playing the best of everything **SIDEWALK**

SWAGGERLUCIOUS Every Saturday night (Room 4) **SWAGGER CLUB**

THE BREAKFAST CLUB

CLUB CHIC

DJ NIKKI 1st Sat night **EQUATOR BAR**

DJ PARTY NIGHT Open from 10pm

THE FOX

#JUST SAYING

...drinks o...
...nkl...
...nkl...

BAR JESTER

KARAOKE Every...
THE WELINGTON

WEST MIDLANDS

CAMP & SLAG 9pm-6am. Drinks from £1.50 until midnight. DJ Phill Gardner until 2.30am, then Slag residents until sunrise

GORGEOUS, WOLVERHAMPTON

BIG NIGHT OUT 8-11pm

THE LION, WALSALL

CLUB NIGHT 10-11pm

THE THREE FURNACES, Telford

BIG SATURDAY NIGHT OUT Ch...
...nkl...
...nkl...

RAINBOWS, COVENTRY

INCLUSION with big nam...

THE BELL, STOURBRIDGE

NOT TO MISS Free admission

...re 11pm Tanya Hyd...

...aret show xpm

PINK, STOKE ON TRENT

EAST MIDLANDS

BIG WEEKEND PARTY NIGHT

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

BIG SATURDAY NIGHT OUT -

...ent discounts

NG1, NOTTINGHAM

CLUB NIGHT 10-11pm

HELSEINKI, LEICESTER

MARY MAC heads to Birmingham's Eden Bar

Saturday 4 April sees a fantastic cabaret act take to the stage at the award-winning Eden Bar in Birmingham. The act in question? It's none other than Mary Mac! With a sensational voice and hilarious quips aplenty, she'll make sure you have a night out to remember! It's free entry into Eden Bar too - so be sure to stop by and have a great time!

EDEN - BIRMINGHAM



LIVE CABARET at The Village Inn with Mrs Mills and more

If you're a big fan of cabaret, and Friday night at The Village Inn wasn't enough for you, fear not - the popular Hurst Street venue hosts cabaret on Sunday nights too! This month's stars are: Miss Thunderpussy (Sun 5 Apr), Barbie (Sun 12 Apr), Miss Lips (Sun 19 Apr), Champagne Shirley (Sun 26 Apr) and the Divine Miss M (Sun 29 Mar). Plus, it's happy hour till 10pm, so get down there and end the week with a laugh!



BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS Sunday to Friday. A day & night. Wind down after work with a cocktail or two **THE LOFT LOUNGE**

DISCO & KARAOKE with DJ Nick. Every Sunday **ENJOY INN**

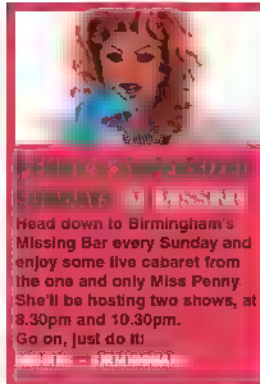
MISS PENNY'S SUPERNOVA SUNDAYS Cabaret every Sunday hosted by the one and only Miss Penny on stage at 8.30pm and 10.30pm **MILKIE BAR**

SUNDAY BREAKFAST The perfect hangover cure from 9am. Just £7.95. Carvery from 12noon for just £9.95

THE LOFT LOUNGE

SUNDAY CABS ON A LIVE CABARET with Mrs Mills and DJ Deano. Plus Bingo with Mrs Mills from 7pm **Sun 5 Apr** Miss Thunderpussy **Sun 12 Apr** Barbie **Sun 19 Apr** Miss Lips **Sun 26 Apr** Champagne Shirley **THE VILLAGE INN**

SUPER SUNDAY DINNER served from 1pm. Cure that hangover and choose from a variety of meats



with all the best bits of a roast for only £6.95 **SIDEWALK**

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THREE COURSE LUNCH only £7.95 **THE WELLINGTON**

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MARTY'S PARTY 9pm-4am. Fun &

Games. Karaoke. Prizes and a round mayhem. Drinks from £2 **GORGEOUS, WOLVERHAMPTON**

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QUEENS OF DRAG with Dix. Ticket Plus DJ. Snacks & Karaoke. cabaret

THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

BARBIE PARTY ROOM

THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

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EAST MIDLANDS

BRUNCH CLUB Brunch for £

RAINBOW & DOVE, LEICESTER

KARAOKE & DINNER

NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM

KARAOKE WITH T 9pm-2am. £

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON



SATURDAY 2ND MAY 2015

2 MENS ROUNDS | 2 LADIES ROUNDS

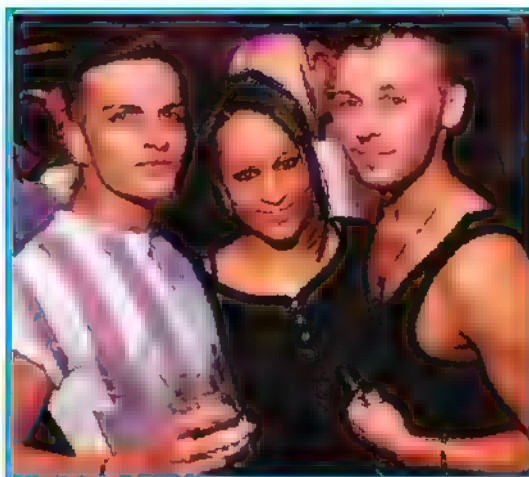
1ST PLACE - £30 BAR TAB | 2ND PLACE - BOTTLE OF PROSECCO

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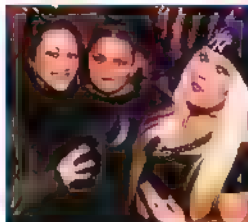
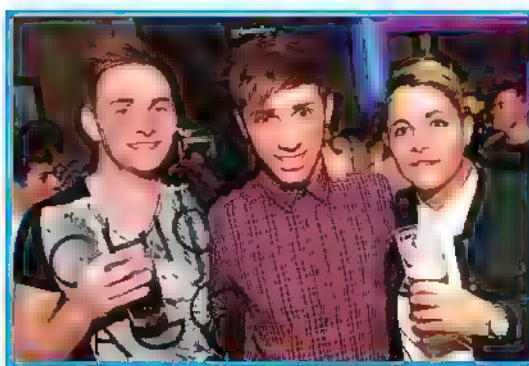
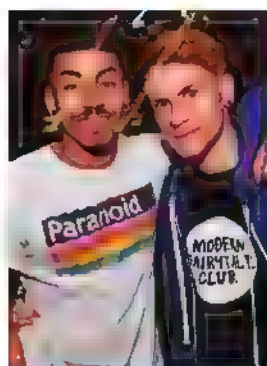
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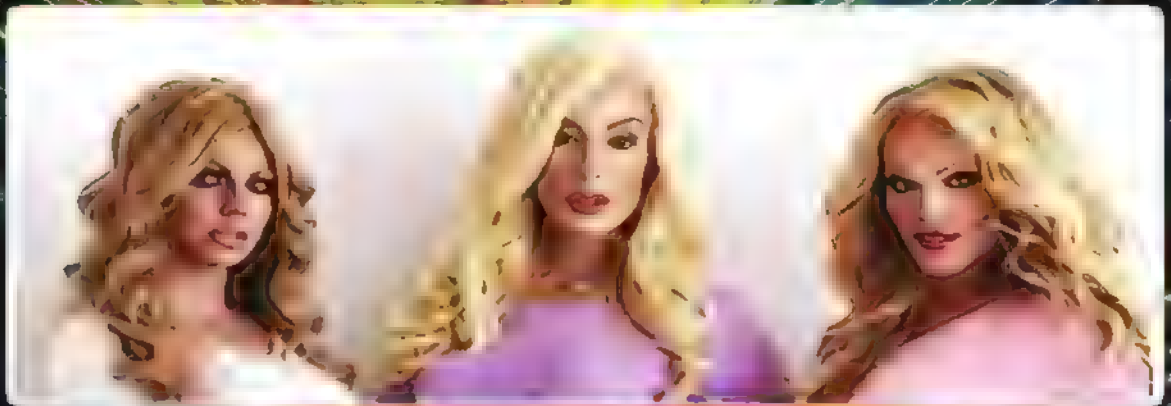


Pictures by Laura Byrne

VILLAGE PEOPLE IN THE PARK SACKVILLE GARDENS

MANCHESTER GAY VILLAGE
SUNDAY 3RD MAY

HEADLINE ACT #AAA GIRLS



BEARFORCE1



VANQUISH



ANGIE BROWN

VILLAGE DRAG QUEENS

VILLAGE DJ'S

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**OUR GAY
VILLAGE M1**

MANCHESTER

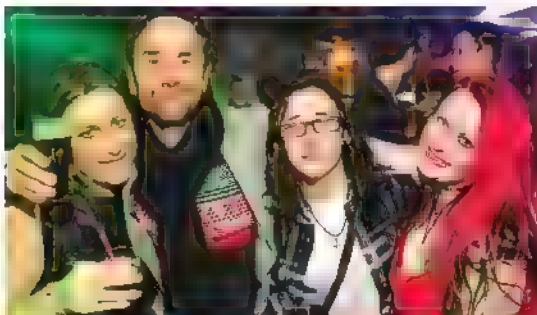
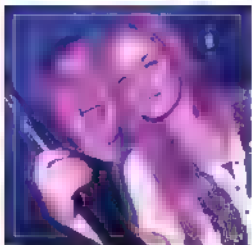
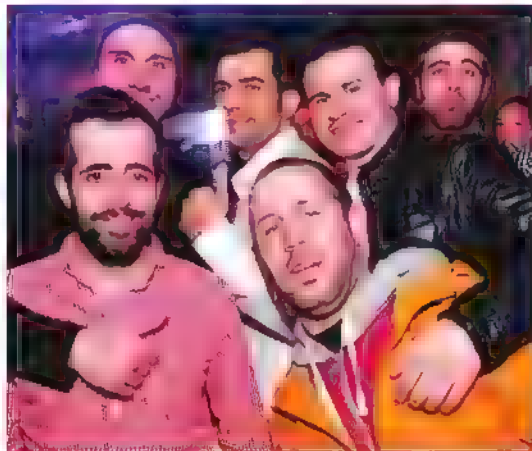
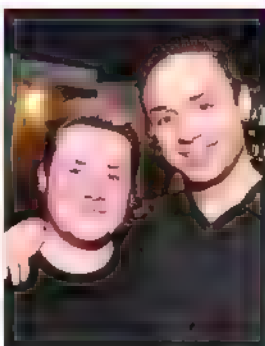
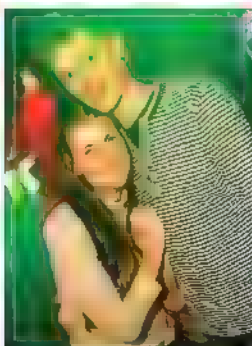
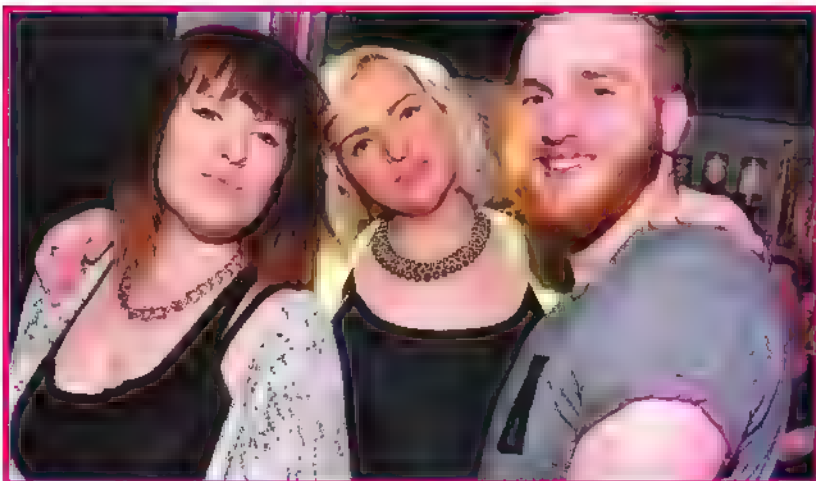
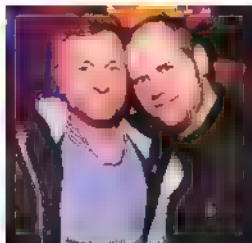
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MANCHESTER

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MANCHESTER

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tuesday**
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TIME TO TURN THE MUSIC UP!

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WACKY!
**WACKY
WEDNESDAYS**
OPEN UNTIL
4AM!

thursdays
party pop
OPEN TIL 4AM

thursdays
Retro
OPEN TIL 4AM

OPEN TIL 4AM
**#Just
saying**
SATURDAYS

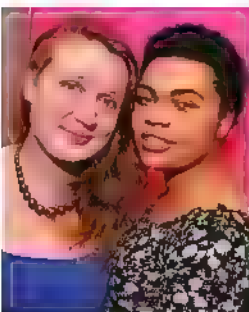
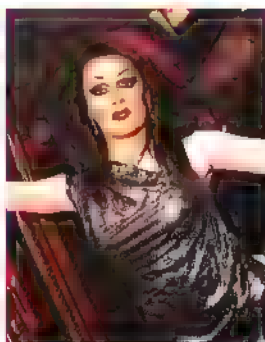
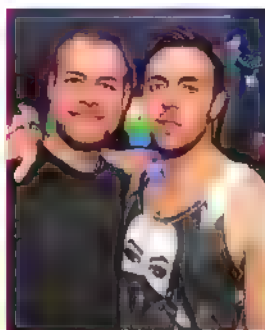
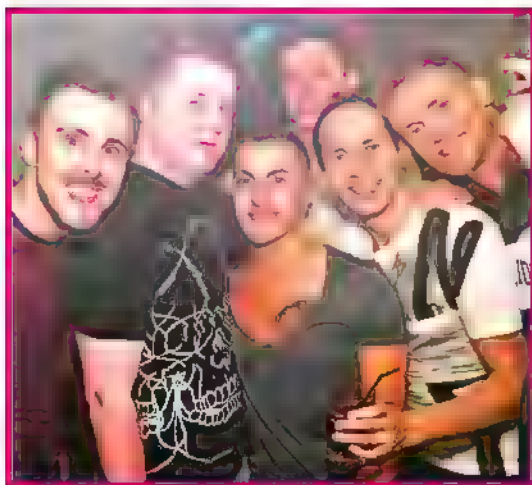
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KELLY
WILDE

SUNDAY 5TH

BANK HOLIDAY SUNDAY

MISS
THUNDERPUSSY

FRIDAY 10TH

DRAG WITH
NO NAME

FRIDAY 17TH

BAGA CHIPZ

FRIDAY 24TH

SANDRA

FRIDAYS TILL 6AM
SATURDAYS TILL 8AM

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ONE
OR 4 FOR
£10

SELECTION INCLUDES

Whitebait with aioli

Pork meatballs with spicy
tomato sauce

Beef battered onion rings with
smoked paprika mayo

Potato bravas with tomato
herb sauce

Calamari with sweet
chilli sauce

Marinated olives

Breaded mushrooms
with aioli

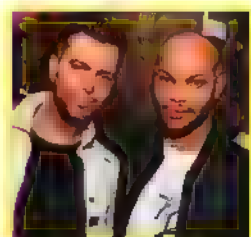
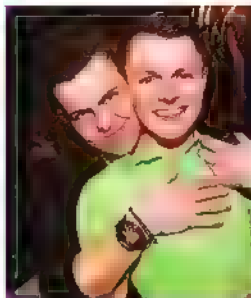
BBQ chicken wings

f @loftloounge

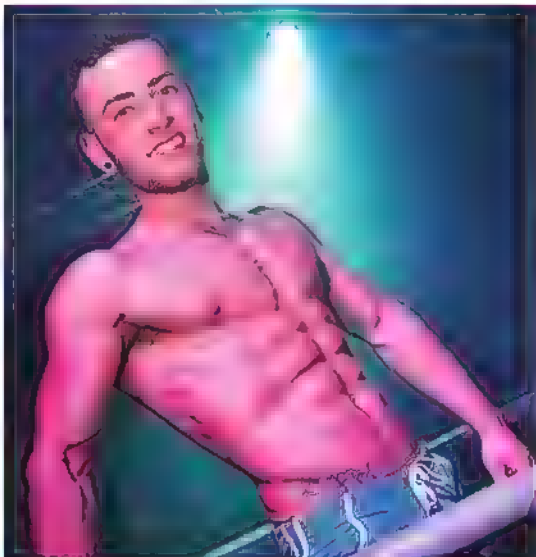
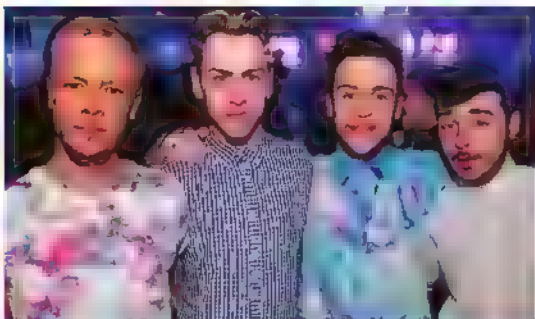
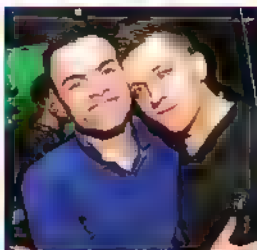
t @loftloounge

loftloounge

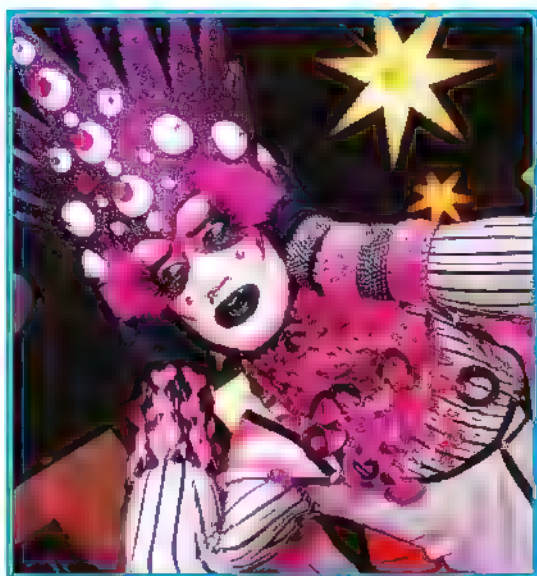
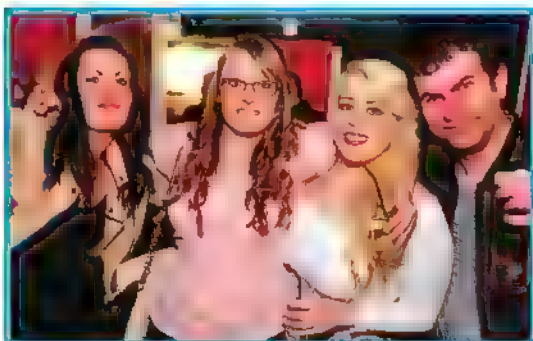
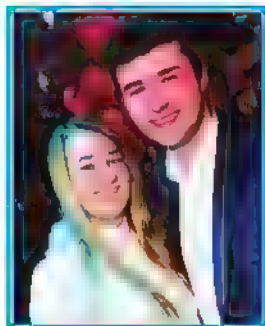
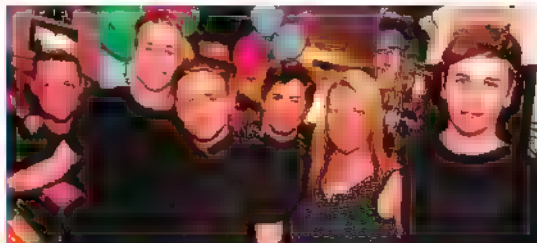
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It's one big party at Birmingham's **Nightingale Club**



Dance, dance, dance at Birmingham's **Missing Bar!**





MISS PENNY'S

EASTER SUNDAY

EGG HUNT

SUNDAY 5TH APRIL

WITH DOUBLE CABARET
AT 8.30PM & 10.30PM

EASTER EGG
TOMBOLA



EASTER SPECIAL

MONDAY 6TH APRIL 2015

MUSIC BY THE MIX BY

DJ MIKE EMERY

HUGE EGG DRINK SELECTION

FIND YA' SELF AN EASTER CHICKEN!

BIRMINGHAM'S GAYEST MONDAY NIGHT PARTY!



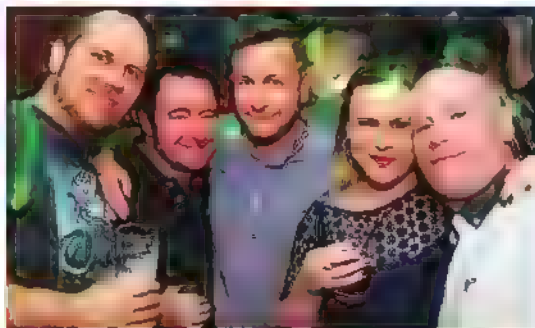
DOUBLE CABARET
SHOWTIME AT 8.30PM & 10.30PM

MISS PENNY'S
SUPERSIZE
SUNDAYS

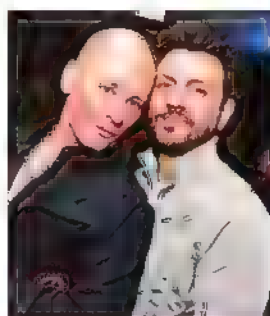
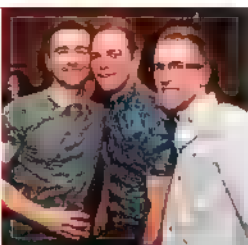
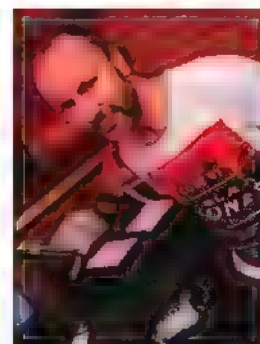
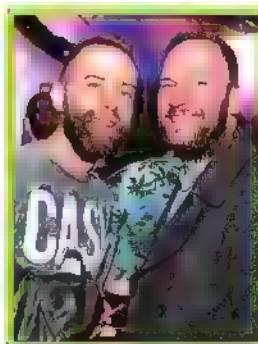
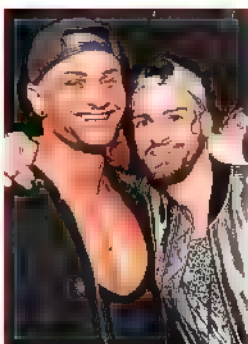
Missing

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Eden: A night out at Brum's best bar for men



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Photos by Mrs. Syren

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EDEN APRIL

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**FRIDAY
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Lip Gloss

with your host **MISS PENNY!**

**Cabaret Stripper
TILLY! STALLION**

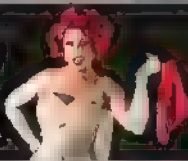
Champagne reception,
Topless waiter, Raffle, Buffet,
Makeover with Faye Sanders,
Fashion show with Matt Hawkins,
DJ Jason Green

**SATURDAY
4th**

QUEENS OF POP

**THURSDAY
9th**

La Voix



**SATURDAY
11th**

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No Membership Fee - Large NEW Bar with
Exclusive Drinks Offers
Same Great Atmosphere

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**FRIDAY
17th**

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Monthly Meet
In the Marquee
Special Drinks
Offers All Night



WINNER - Best Midlands Gay Venue for Men

**THURSDAY
16th**

DRAG IDOL HEAT 1

**SATURDAY
18th**

PRIDE IN SPORT

**THURSDAY
23rd**

La Voix & DRAG IDOL



**SATURDAY
25th**

MARY MAC



**THURSDAY
30th**



& DRAG IDOL

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AWARDS**

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everyone that took the
time to vote for Eden
this year from Garry,
Cal and the team at Eden.

Best Midlands Gay Venue for Men
Best Midlands Gay Community Bar
Best Venue Front of House Team
Best Front of House Person
Best LGBT Sport/Social Group
Best Midlands Bar DJ

EVERY THURS



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www.theedenbar.co.uk

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See pictures on page 46

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Tel: 0121 622 1452

THE FAN

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www.theloftlounge.co.uk

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See pictures on page 42

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See pictures on page 44

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www.nightingaleclub.co.uk

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See pictures on page 48

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See pictures on page 36

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See pictures on page 40

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Beautiful Thing: A Love Story

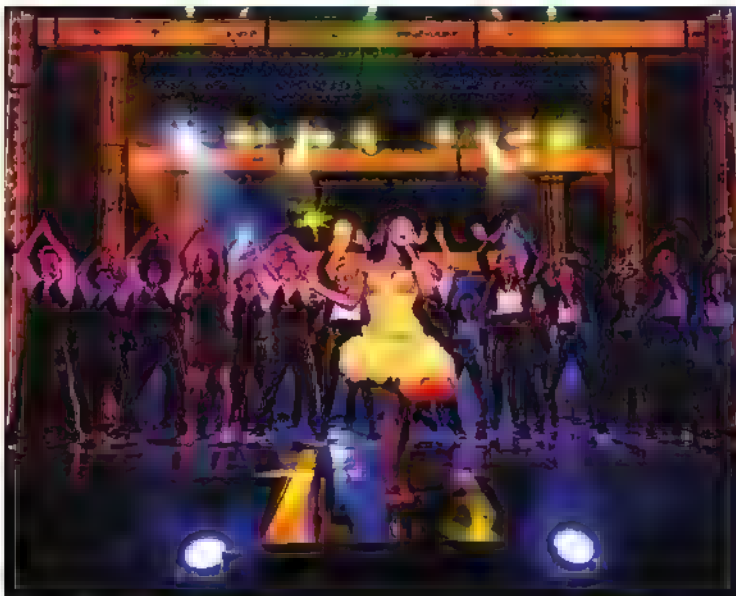
Jonathan Harvey's award-winning play tells the story of teenager Jamie's relationship with his classmate and neighbour Ste...

Numerous well-known actors have appeared in Beautiful Thing during its twenty-year history - among them Jonny Lee Miller, Suranne Jones, Hugh Bonneville, Philip Glenister, Andrew Garfield and Rhys Ifans. Productions have been mounted in countries including China, France, Canada, Australia and Holland.

EastEnders actors Charlie Brooks and Thomas Law star in this latest version of the play, and are joined by Sam Thomas from Channel Four's hit teen drama Skins.

The Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome, until Sat 11 April.

Nottingham Playhouse, Tue 21 April - Sat 9 May.
Curve Studio, Leicester, Mon 25 - Sat 30 May



The Bodyguard

X Factor winner Alexandra Burke (Wolverhampton) and Pop idol contestant Zoe Birkett (Stoke) take turns in playing principal character Rachel Marron in this touring production of the blockbuster West End musical.

When ex-Secret Service agent Frank Farmer is hired to protect superstar Rachel from an unknown stalker, sparks soon fly between the pair. Each expects to hold the whip-hand in the relationship, neither expects to fall in love.

Based on the hit 1990s movie starring Kevin Costner and Whitney Houston, the show features classic numbers including One Moment In Time, I Wanna Dance With Somebody and the legendary I Will Always Love You. The show received mixed reviews from critics when it opened in 2012 but has proved to be a real hit with its audiences - so much so, in fact, that productions are now planned for Broadway, Australia, Germany and the Far East to further extend its considerable fanbase.

Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton, Tues 21 April - Sat 2 May.
Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Tues 19 - Sat 30 May



Shrek

The popularity of this family-friendly West End winner of a show hardly comes as a surprise. After all, Dreamworks' animated Shrek movies, inspired by cartoonist William Steig's 1990 book, were absolutely huge. It was only ever going to be a matter of time before everybody's favourite swamp-dwelling ogre made a big splash away from the silver screen.

After a tentative Broadway start, the production was revised for its subsequent US tour and West End residency - and is all the better for it. Pretty much retelling the story of the first movie, it peddles a line in humour that calls to mind both the surrealist Pythons and an evening of festive-season pantomime fare. There are plenty of new songs to enjoy, too, presented alongside the cult Shrek anthem I'm A Believer. All in all, then, a feelgood show that pretty much touches all the bases for its young target audience, while at the same time offering plenty to keep the adults amused.

Birmingham Hippodrome, until Sun 26 April.
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Wed 30 September - Sun 11 October



Adam Ant

Swashbuckling new wave star Adam Ant made a generation of young girls positively swoon way back in the early 1980s, at his peak playing three hundred gigs a year

Now returning to his musical roots after spending a period of time trying to make it as an actor, he visits the Midlands as part of a promotional tour for seminal debut album *Dirk Wears White Sox*

"In the face of the sterile perfection of the digital age," says Adam, commenting on his Midlands appearances, "I invite you all to an evening of one hundred percent British Leather Rock."

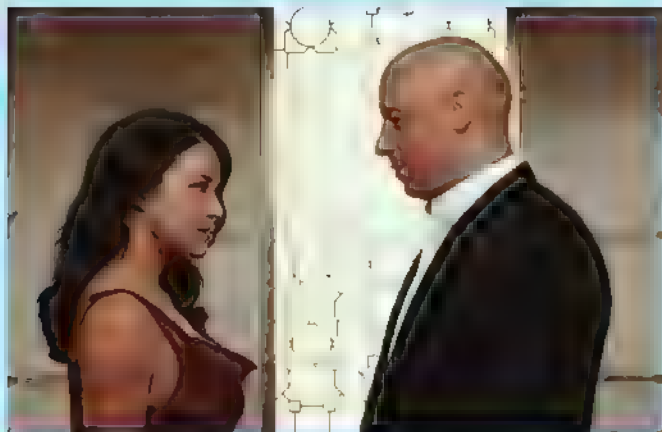
The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton, Thurs 16 April; Student Union Copper Rooms, Warwick University, Coventry, Fri 24 April

Olly Murs

Over the years, plenty of X Factor's aspiring stars have found that scoring a success on the hit TV series is no guarantee of a future in the limelight. Not so Olly Murs, who's impressively transformed from talent show wannabe to celebrity music-maker in his own right. Olly's appearing in Birmingham in support of new album *Never Been Better* and is joined for the gig by the BRIT Award-winning *Ella Eyre*

Barclaycard Arena,
Birmingham,
Sun 26 -
Tues 28 April





Fast & Furious 7 **CERT tbc**

Starring Vin Diesel, Paul Walker, Dwayne Johnson, Michelle Rodriguez, Jordana Brewster, Tyrese Gibson, Ludacris, Lucas Black, Jason Statham, Kurt Russell, Djimon Hounsou Directed by James Wan (USA)

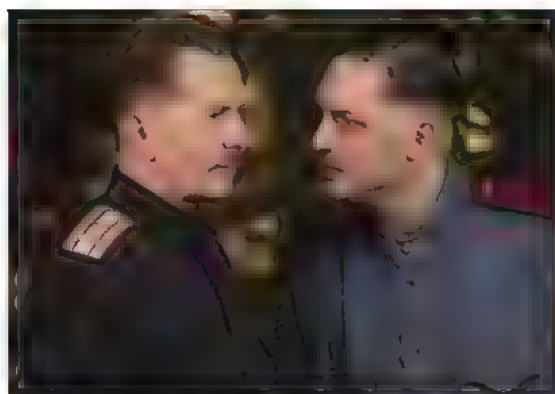
As Fast & Furious 6 (2013) grossed over \$788million at the global box-office, the producers could afford to pay for this astonishing cast of heavyweights. Indeed, the budget finally came in at a wallet buckling \$250million. Jason Statham is the new hardman to beat and you can smell the testosterone from here. He plays the brother of Owen Shaw (played by Luke Evans in the last film) and is out for revenge for Owen's death. Sadly Paul Walker - who plays Brian O'Conner - died during production (in a car, no less) and filming was put on hold for four months while the writers figured out a way to explain his departure from the story (no spoilers here). Filming took place in Abu Dhabi, Toronto, Colorado, Tokyo, Atlanta and California. Out 3 April



Good Kill **CERT 15** (100 mins)

Starring Ethan Hawke, January Jones, Zoë Kravitz, Jake Abel, Bruce Greenwood Directed by Andrew Niccol (USA)

The writer/director Andrew Niccol (Gattaca, S1m0ne in Time) likes to explore ideas of technology and morality. Here he casts Ethan Hawke (Gattaca, Boyhood) as a drone pilot who begins to question the ethics of his job. We can't wait. Out 10 April



Child 44 **CERT 15** (137 mins)

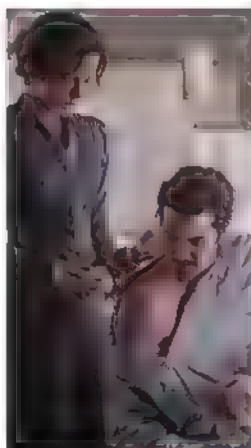
Starring Tom Hardy, Gary Oldman, Noomi Rapace, Joel Kinnaman, Paddy Considine, Jason Clarke, Vincent Cassel Directed by Daniel Espinosa (USA/UK)

Filmed in the Czech Republic, this hard-hitting thriller takes as its subject a spate of child murders. Tom Hardy plays Leo Demidov, a disgraced intelligence agent in the Stalin-era Soviet Union who takes it upon himself to investigate the killings. Based on the 2008 novel by Tom Rob Smith. Out 17 April

Stonehearst Asylum **CERT 15** (101 mins)

Starring Kate Beckinsale, Jim Sturgess, Brendan Gleeson, Ben Kingsley, Michael Caine, David Thewlis Directed by Brad Anderson (USA)

Based on Edgar Allan Poe's short story, The System Of Doctor Tarr And Professor Fether (1845), this violent thriller is set in the mental institution of the title. Here Edward Newgate (Sturgess), a recent medical school graduate, arrives to take up residency. He is then immediately drawn to the very beautiful Eliza Graves (Beckinsale), a woman diagnosed with 'female hysteria'. Out 24 April

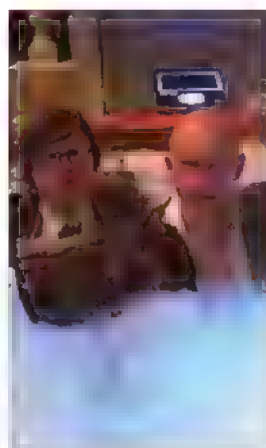


Hot Tub Time Machine 2 **CERT 15**

(102 mins)

Starring Rob Corddry, Craig Robinson, Clark Duke, Adam Scott, Chevy Chase Directed by Steve Pink (USA)

The original film, released in 2010, was a one-joke comedy about three guys transported back to 1986 via a magic hot tub. The sequel, which received withering reviews in the US - sees Corddry, Robinson and Duke now transported into the future. So they have to alter the future in order to save the past. John Cusack, the original star (and producer), is nowhere to be seen. Out 10 April



DVDs

Hidden Away (15)

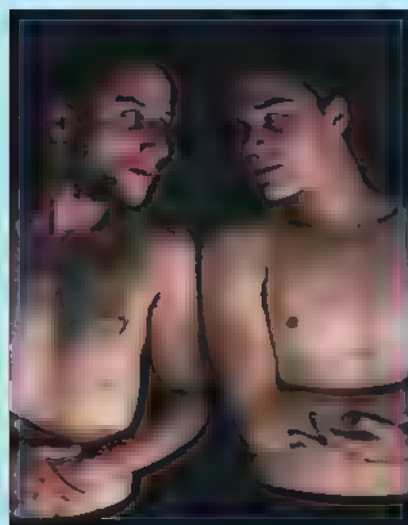


Ibrahim, a 14-year-old Moroccan boy walks down a road on the outskirts of a big city alone and disorientated. He's just been informed that he'll be deported in two days' time, so he's packed up and run away. Now he's alone with no place to go... Rafa, a Spanish boy the same

age as Ibrahim, runs into a club toilet, a bundle of nerves. Outside there's a girl, Marta, waiting for him: a girl who expects far more from him than he's able to give. These two boys' paths are about to cross...

Out Monday 13 April

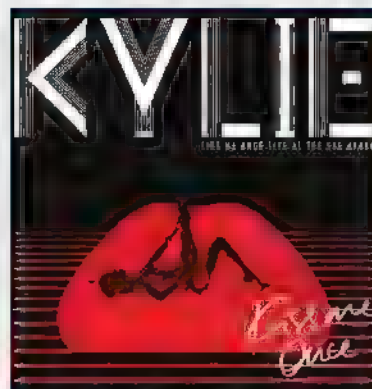
Land Of Storms (18)



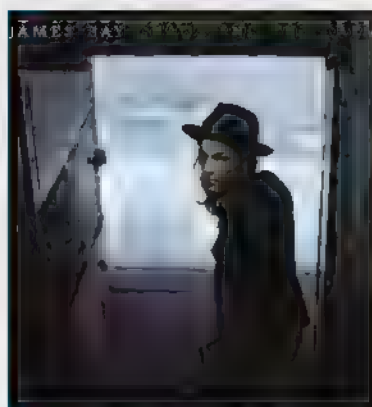
This hot three-way love story sees freshman soccer player Szabi move from Hungary to Germany to become a professional athlete. While he usually gets along with fellow player and roommate Bernard, a lost game and a quarrel compel Szabi to return to Hungary, where he's inherited his grandparents' derelict home. One night, when someone tries to steal his old bike, he meets Aron, a young man from the village. What starts as a rough meeting changes when they begin to work together on the house. Their simple and basic life turns complicated when Bernard shows up from Germany. Then the locals start to react to the threesome... Land Of Storms is a strong, personal story of sexual awakening, self-discovery and intolerance.

Out Monday 13 April

New Music

Kiss Me Once Live
Kylie

Relive the whole experience of Kylie's incredible Kiss Me Once Live tour, courtesy of this must-have recording from the SSE Hydro. If you love Kylie, you'll love this.

Chaos And The Calm
James Bay

James Bay's debut album is set to further cement his reputation as one of the UK's brightest talents. It's released on the back of numerous international shows, sold-out tours and chart-topping songs.

NOW 90
Various Artists

The biggest album of the year so far is here! This 90th edition of the UK's longest-running compilation album features the biggest chart hits from late 2014 and early 2015.



...and something to read

Spartacus International Gay Guide
2015/2016

The most successful travel guide for the gay market, Spartacus is both practical and easy to use. The guide features information about more than 160 countries worldwide in five different languages and also provides distinct and colourful country and city maps to assist rapid orientation. The legal and social situation for gay men in each country is explained too, with the guide also containing over 21,000 addresses covering all aspects of gay life, from hotels to beaches.



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ALCOHOL - LGBT SUPPORT GROUP

birmingham lgbt

Legal Scene: Estate Planning and Power of Attorney - Safeguard Your Future...

Most people know they should prepare their affairs for when they're no longer here. But so many put off doing so, often leaving heartache and anguish for those who're left behind. Here, Lee Trubshaw - Partner at Solicitors Bradin Trubshaw & Kirwan LLP - highlights common mistakes to avoid.

It's a myth that 'estate planning' is only for the rich. If you own something of value, such as a house or car, or you have children, then planning how you wish your personal and financial affairs to be handled after your death (and during your lifetime) is something you should seriously consider. Many people simply 'haven't got around to it' - but I have witnessed many sad cases where procrastination has resulted in unnecessary stress for partners and family.

No Will

A Will is the starting point for any estate planning. If you don't have one and die intestate then the law determines who will inherit your assets - which may not reflect your true wishes. Remember to regularly review/update your Will. Things change in life. For example, if you already have a Will and then enter into a marriage or civil partnership, your Will will automatically be revoked unless it specifically states that it is in contemplation of that marriage. Remember too that civil partnership dissolution or a second civil partnership/marriage may influence who you wish to benefit from your estate.

Planning for disability

Estate planning should also cover the 'what ifs' - What if you become mentally or physically incapacitated during your lifetime? Unexpected or long term disability

will undoubtedly impact on your personal and financial affairs. That's why it's important to appoint a Power of Attorney, which allows you to specify who you wish to handle your affairs in the event that you cannot do so for yourself.

There are two categories of Power of Attorney: Ordinary and Lasting, the latter being the most usual form. Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) must be drawn up whilst the person, known as the 'donor', still has the mental capacity to authorise who may make decisions on their behalf if they lose the ability to do so for themselves. In addition, there are two kinds of LPA - you can make one or both types. The Health and Welfare LPA allows decisions to be made about, for example, your medical care, moving into a care home and accepting/refusing life-sustaining treatment. The Property and Financial Affairs LPA covers decisions about money and property.

An Ordinary Power of Attorney, meanwhile, is a legal document which allows someone to act on your behalf concerning your finances whilst you still have the mental capacity to monitor what they're doing - for example, if you had to go into hospital.

Making your wishes known legally will protect your partner and/or family from having to go through the courts, which can be very longwinded and can prevent them from making decisions for which you may need answers quickly.

It's also important to think carefully about who to appoint as your Power of Attorney - whether you trust someone to make decisions, such as about your medical care, in your best

interests. Also consider how well they manage their own finances. Selecting the right person/people is a big decision. If in doubt, impartial professional advisers may be a better option.

Financial planning for your children

You may perceive your finances to be straightforward and uncomplicated, but if you have young children you should consider planning what will happen to their inheritance in the event of your death, and who you wish to manage their affairs on their behalf until they're old enough to do so for themselves. Remember, this should include any online bank accounts you may have.

Tax-exemption laws

Estate planning can also maximise the value of the estate that you leave to your beneficiaries. However, tax planning is a complex area, so be aware that doing it yourself could actually increase your tax liability. To avoid the pitfalls, it may be wise to seek professional advice on the optimum tax planning strategies to meet your particular needs to help minimise estate taxes.

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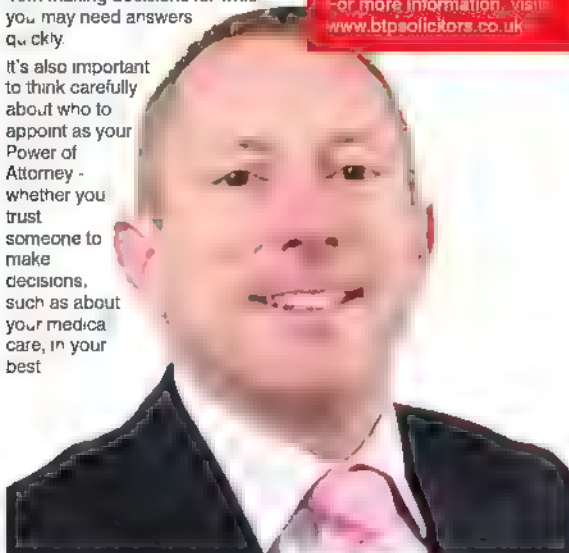
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For advice on Powers of Attorney, civil partnerships and other legal matters contact Bradin Trubshaw & Kirwan LLP on 01543 421840 or a consultation, or email lt@btklsolicitors.com. For more information, visit www.btklsolicitors.co.uk



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Botox: The facts about the nation's favourite anti-wrinkle injections

Celebrities the world over regularly receive botulinum toxin injections - more commonly known as botox - in an effort to keep themselves looking young and attractive. Here, Ian Morgan from Soul Care Aesthetics in Cannock tells Midlands Zone the truth about the popular anti-wrinkle treatment.

What is botulinum toxin?

Botulinum toxin is a chemical produced by the bacterium *Clostridium botulinum*.

Azaxure is a trade name for a derivative of the toxin (Botulinum toxin type A) which, when injected into a muscle, causes it to become weakened or inactivated.

It stops the muscle from functioning by blocking neuromuscular transmission, i.e. it stops the chemical messages from the nerve to the muscle.

How does it work?

By using facial muscles repeatedly throughout life, the skin is creased in areas of greatest use. The aging process causes the slowdown of collagen and elastin production in the skin. As we get older, these areas of over-use become damaged and the lines become permanent. By reducing the movement of the muscles in these areas, the skin stops being creased and is allowed to recover, causing the lines to soften or even fade away.

In the areas treated, the muscles are temporarily inactivated (always reversible) during which time the patient can break the subconscious habit of overusing these muscles. Depending on each individual and the dose used, the response to treatment can vary from a relaxation of the muscles to an inability to move the muscles.

For the first couple of years, frequent treatments are required to 're-eradicate' the facial muscles activity. Thereafter, treatments would be less frequent until a yearly maintenance treatment is normally all that's required.

How long has it been used?

As long ago as 1978, botulinum toxin was used as a treatment for patients with eye squints, by weakening the overactive eye muscle. Since then, it's been used in a variety of therapeutic areas such as spasmodic neck, writer's cramp, tics, multiple sclerosis, facial spasm, Parkinson's disease and cerebral palsy, to name but a few. In more recent times the use of botox for cosmetic therapy has become more widespread.

How safe is Botox?

In high concentrations, botulinum toxin is a potent poison. However, used in minute doses, as it is in cosmetic therapy, it has a very high margin of safety.

What happens during treatment?

The procedure takes about five to 10 minutes. The practitioner will ask you to use certain muscles of the face to observe how they work.



An extremely fine, short needle is used to inject the botulinum toxin into the appropriate area. This may cause some slight but brief discomfort. The area may have some slight redness and swelling which normally resolves in an hour or two. The treatment normally starts to take effect after 4 to 14 days, but this may vary slightly between individuals. The effects will normally last between 2 and 6 months, when you will start to notice an ability to move the muscles more freely.

What are the side effects?

Side effects of this treatment are rare.

Occasionally a temporary drooping of the eyelid can occur. This may last a few weeks but will always resolve. Special eye drops can be prescribed during this time to help lift the lid back into the normal position.

In extremely rare cases, some patients have developed an allergy to the treatment, while others have shown resistance, i.e. it causes little or no effect on the treated muscle.

With a wealth of experience and expertise in all aesthetic treatments, Ian Morgan is the resident Consultant Surgeon at Soul Care Aesthetics. He's also the lead UK trainer and international trainer for Silhouette Soft.

Ian is happy to offer a free consultation or further help and advice in any aesthetic treatments, to ensure you get the best and safest treatment.



Birmingham LGBT to host a Pride In Sport day this month

Birmingham LGBT is running a Pride In Sport day on Saturday 18 April.

The event, running from noon until 6pm, will take place at the University of Birmingham. You can compete as an individual, a team of four or indeed both. There will be around 10 activities and Birmingham LGBT is requesting that participants pick a minimum of three. Points will be awarded for the standard reached. Activities planned so far include badminton, football, rugby, running, swimming, table tennis, water polo, rowing and netball. Local LGBT clubs are devising the skills tests and tournaments.

You can gain extra points for travelling to the event from the Birmingham LGBT Centre on foot, by cycle or canoe. You can add a final flourish to your total with the last event - ballroom dancing (instruction given).

The day finishes with a social event. If you don't fancy competing, how about volunteering to help with stewarding and marshalling, record keeping and scoring?

For further details please contact Activate's Sports Activator, pennybarber@bglbt.org 0121 643 0821.

Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service launches LGBT-support scheme

Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service has launched a new scheme to support its lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender firefighters and staff.

The Leicester Mercury reports: 'The shOUT! network will offer advice and raise awareness of LGBT issues within the county fire service.'

'Scores of people gathered at central fire station, in Lancaster Road, to promote the launch of the service.'

'The chief fire officer Dave Webb, who retires in April, was joined by former deputy chief constable of Leicestershire Police and councilor Susan Barton, the central fire authority's lead on equality.'

'Mr Webb said: "Providing support to LGBT staff is vitally important to the fire and rescue service. By doing so we can help to ensure that staff can be comfortable as themselves at work and so perform to the very best of their abilities. This essentially makes for a more comfortable and pleasant workplace and helps us to continue to deliver the best service to our

communities. Launching shOUT is a great step in helping us to achieve these aims, and I'm absolutely delighted to be part of it."

'The event featured talks from Leicestershire and Cheshire firefighters about LGBT and a scheme called Straight Ally - which sees heterosexual colleagues help promote LGBT issues in the workplace.'

'The shOUT! network will also work with other similar projects in Leicestershire organised by the police and ambulance services.'

'Paul Fitzgerald, CEO at the LGBT Centre, Leicester, which supported the event said: "The LGBT Centre works hard to support our LGBT communities. Our work with employers such as Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service is a vital part of this. In working with them, we help them to understand the benefits of supporting their LGBT staff and how their services can be tailored and targeted to the needs of the LGBT communities in Leicester Leicestershire and Rutland."

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Birmingham Gay Symphony Orchestra announces showstopping Pride Proms

Think Pride and you think huge parties, colourful parades and a weekend you'll never forget.

But on Saturday 23 May, wander up to Adrian Boult Concert Hall at the Birmingham Conservatoire and you'll find a party like no other, as the musicians of the Birmingham Gay Symphony Orchestra (BGSO) perform their flagship Pride Proms concert.

BGSO Pride Proms is quickly becoming a much anticipated element of the Birmingham Pride weekend celebrations, the orchestra combining with a specially formed chorus to perform a selection of much-loved music.

Combining classical favourites and popular showstoppers, this year's concert includes John Williams' music for Jurassic Park, the rousing Dambusters March and a medley of Rodgers & Hammerstein classics. Performed alongside music by Elgar, Vivaldi and Handel, it's an evening that will make your toes tap and your heart swell. And guest presenter Andrew Ridgeley will ensure the energy is kept at a sky-

high level throughout!

"Everyone knows the famous BBC Proms in London," said Jack Lovell, BGSO Music Director. "BGSO Pride Proms captures that energy with a special LGBT twist and all in Birmingham's Adrian Boult Hall. If you're interested in taking part, please get in touch and join the orchestra or chorus; you just need to be really enthusiastic!"

To purchase tickets for the Pride Proms 2015, visit bgso.org.uk.

A retiring collection will be made at the end of the event in aid of the Albert Kennedy Trust, which supports young homeless LGBTs in crisis.

Visit akt.org.uk to find out more about this fantastic charity.

BGSO is made up of musicians of all abilities from Birmingham and the Midlands. The orchestra performs three concerts per year.

If you're interested in playing with them, or becoming a member of the BGSO chorus, visit their website at bgso.org.uk.




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HOL MARRIED MEN'S GROUP Support group for married men. Tel: 0116 254 1747

HIGH 5 GROUP An HIV awareness group for gay, bi, trans and M/J men. Tel: 0116 254 1747

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PINK PARENTS A support networking group for all lesbian and gay parents. Tel: 0116 254 1747

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RUBY'S Mature Women's Group Support group for mature women. Tel: 01902 425092

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LGBT Helpline

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DREYSHIRE LGBT SWITCHBOARD Tel: 0116 254 1747

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INTEGRATED RESPONSE PROJECT Tel: 0116 254 1747

GAYLIFE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE Tel: 0300 123 0970

MATE CRIME NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE Tel: 0116 254 1747

LING COUNSELLING SERVICE Free counselling service for all sorts of LGBT related issues. Tel: 0116 254 1747

LEICESTER LGBT HELP-LINE Tel: 01533 250 250

LGBT AA MEETING West Midlands. 8pm every Sat. Summit House, Dudley. Tel: 01384 243220

COVENTRY & WARWICK SHINE FRIEND Tel: 0121 240 2900

DREYSHIRE LGBT SWITCHBOARD Tel: 0116 254 1747

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Support Groups

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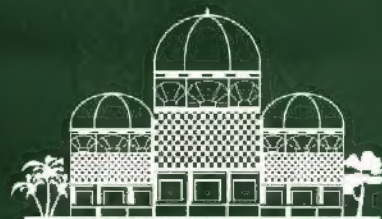
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THE GUDRUN LIMBRICK COLUMN

Zoning Out

I started writing this column in 2000. Looking back over the past 15 years, a huge amount has undoubtedly changed for gay people in the UK. An end to the barring of gay people in the armed forces; the age of consent reduced to 16; gay couples having equal rights to adopt; Section 28 repealed (about bloody time); civil partnerships brought in; the Equality Act making it illegal to discriminate in the workplace; lesbian parents given rights in terms of in vitro fertilisation; same-sex marriage becoming a real thing; trans people given the legal right to have their gender recognised.

There was also an unholy row about B&Bs, and an official apology given to Alan Turing. Bit late. We witnessed the first Tory lesbian MP, the first MP to reveal his HIV+ status, the first openly gay children's TV presenter, and the first rugby player to come out while still competing at the top level.



Our local gay scene has changed enormously. Some pubs have gone, new ones have arrived and there have been a fair few refurbishments. Some of the old faces (no offence meant) are still around and many new faces have come along.

One thing hasn't changed at all, though. It's just up there, at the top of this column. My photo. In a reversal of Oscar Wilde's *The Picture Of Dorian Gray* - in which the portrait in the attic aged horribly, leaving Dorian to prance about forever youthful - my photograph has retained all the joys of youth while the actual me has travelled 15 years down the haggard highway. In hindsight (and this goes out as essential advice to all column writers), I should've had a new photograph taken every month, so that the aging process would've been so gradual that no-one noticed it. However, I didn't, and now it's too late. Swapping the old photo for an up-to-date one would be too much of a shock to all concerned.

This vanity isn't the only reason my column-writing days are now over. I have left the Midlands to live by the seaside. I've put myself out to pasture - before anyone else does it for me - and swapped the noise of Spaghetti Junction for the sound of the waves pounding the beach.

So thank you to everyone who's come up and told me that they've read my column. And thanks to Midlands Zone for having me. It's been a blast.

COLUMNISTS WANTED!

We're on the look out for creative and passionate writers to pen a monthly column for Midlands Zone magazine, both in print and online. This is a great opportunity for your work to be viewed by over 50,000 readers across the country and will provide great experience, especially for students.

If you've got a message to send out, no matter what the subject, email Midlands Zone Editor

Ryan Humphreys - ryan@midlandszone.co.uk

Provide a short introduction and examples of some previous work, along with an idea of what you'd be keen to write about.



ON THE BALL with Steve Ball

Politically (In)correct

Jeremy Clarkson is hitting the headlines again after yet another bout of political incorrectness saw him allegedly punch a BBC producer.

Convenient as it would be for us to believe that gays would never sink to such levels, two recent stories have proved that straights don't have a monopoly on prejudice and bigotry.

First, French gay voters are falling for the National Front's leader Marine Le Pen. A recent survey revealed that 26% of gay Parisians support Le Pen compared with 16% of heterosexual voters. It's apparently a result of Le Pen courting the gay vote and ludicrously suggesting that they face threats from French Muslims following the recent attacks on Charlie Hebdo magazine.

Meanwhile, Italian fashion icons Dolce and Gabbana claimed IVF kids are synthetic, chemical children. Their claim resulted in Sir Elton John calling for a worldwide boycott of Dolce and Gabbana goods.

As the longest and least predictable general election campaign officially kicks off, things may well heat up here in the UK too. The leaders of all our main political parties now support LGBT rights and, unthinkable as it would have been 20 years ago, a Conservative Prime Minister has introduced equal marriage. UKIP

stands alone in the current political landscape by opposing gay marriage. Indeed, if one of its slightly more eccentric members is to be believed, gay marriage was the cause of last year's floods.

The general election will give us all the chance to think and talk about issues that affect us all, including the NHS, public spending cuts and education. I will be chairing another Queer Question Time at Birmingham's Penthouse, above the Loft Lounge, on Wednesday 29 April at 7.30pm. Doors will open at 7pm, providing audience members with time to submit questions for the panel. Confirmed panelists include Peter Tatchell from the Green Party and Andrew Mitchell from the Conservatives. If previous QQTs are anything to go by, it promises to be a lively and, at times, controversial evening.

Tickets are free but need to be booked online at www.blgbt.org. Hope to see you there!



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